Selected Writings of

MADHUSUDAN DAS

Edited by Pritish Acharya



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Madhusudan Das: A Biographical Sketch

Madhusudan Das (1848-1934) is regarded as one of the pioneers of modern Orissa. If one goes by the popular perception he would be 'the greatest leader' Utkal (Orissa) has had in all times to come. He is variously known as *Madhubabu, Mr. Das, Utkal Gaurav* (Pride of Utkal), *Desaprana* (The Patriot), *Odishara Janaka*, (The Creator of Orissa) *Satabdira Surya* (The Sun of the Century) and *'Kulabriddha'* (The Grand Old man), which indicates the enormous popularity he enjoyed in the state. Barring Gopabandhu Das (1877-1928), who was instrumental in the formation of the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee (UPCC), the Orissa chapter of the Indian National Congress (INC), and the launching of the Non-Co-operation movement in the state, no other leader could match the level of popularity which Madhusudan enjoyed during and after the nationalist struggle and in Orissa his birth day is celebrated as Lawyer's Day and *Swabhiman Divas* (Self-Respect Day) in all parts of Orissa both at official and popular levels. Many schools, colleges and youth clubs are named after him, a clear indication of his popularity.

In the late 19th century India witnessed the process of nation making and the emergence of national movements in different regions of the country. The foundation of the Indian National Congress in December 1885 could be seen as the culmination of that process, when the nationalist intelligentsia from different parts of the country formed a common forum. The movements at the regional and local

level were gradually becoming conspicuous by exhibiting their uniqueness and by asserting their independent identities. Such regional developments not only strengthened the roots of federal India, but also broadened the scope for the emergence of national level leaders. The national leaders became the co-ordinators of the regional and the local moorings. Leadership in nationalist struggle meant nothing but some sort of a co-ordination between the various local and regional movements. The regional level leaders, while espousing the broad national cause, high lighted the regional aspirations. With out them the national movement would not have had strong local roots. In other words, national and regional leaders complimented each other. This meant between the two one did not become more or less important than the other. It is in such a backdrop that leaders like Madhusudan Das, who primarily worked at the regional level in Orissa, become extremely relevant for academic discussion. The nation always remained a top priority to them, but, the interest and identity of the region was equally important in their thought processes. While at the national level they put forward the regional view points, at the regional settings they vociferously brought the various national issues. It was because of their efforts at balancing the two; the process of nation making in India became relatively smooth, deep rooted and strong. A discussion focusing on the life and activities of a regional-nationalist (or nationalist-regional) leader like Madhusudan Das would hopefully broaden our understanding of the nationalist struggle in India. It will help us to see the regional roots, the varied forms and the wider groundings of the movement.

Madhusudan Das was born at Satyabhamapur near Salepur in Cuttack district of Orissa on 28th April 1848. His father was Raghunath Das and mother Parvati Devi. As Raghunath was a village zamindar with no less landed

property, Madhusudan suffered no such economic hardship in his childhood unlike many other early nationalists of the period. His schooling began in the village. In his incomplete autobiography he has given a graphic picture of the system of traditional learning, which he had experienced as a student. More than the content and the infrastructure, which were badly lacking then, it was the intense and intimate relationship between the teaching, the teacher and the taught in the traditional system of learning, which seems to have had a great impact on him.

As a child Madhusudan Das was named Govinda, a name he cast away later on. The family story which greatly inspired the child Govinda was related to the sacrifice his great grand mother had made as a young widow. She had committed *Sati* on the pyre of her deceased husband. His grandmother, who was an eye witness to the 'great event', would very enthusiastically give a graphic detail of this story to the grand children, Govinda and Gopal (Madhusudan's younger brother), every time the latter request her to tell a story. Govinda also loved to listen to the 'great story' of the family. As a social reformist of the 19th century Madhusudan otherwise might have been a critique of the many social evils such as the *Sati* system, but the story instilled a sense of selflessness and sacrifice in him and remained in his fond memory throughout the life. He was immensely proud of 'inheriting the blood of a *satee* [*sati*]'.He said, 'Even at my advanced age I feel it my sacred duty not to paint the *satee*'s blood diverting from the path of duty from fear of personal injury, or loss of any kind.'

Madhusudan passed his entrance examination from Cuttack in 1864, which made him qualified to take entry into the under graduate course. However, that was the highest level of learning available in Orissa then. In Cuttack school he was teased by his Bengali schoolmates, for his rustic look and attire, and for his Oriya identity. The school

headmaster, a Bengali himself, even punished him for his argumentative nature, which became his main asset later. A child who 'was loved, respected and blessed as the scion of an old family of zamindars' in the village had to suffer scorn and teasing outside. The strong desire to go for higher studies to Calcutta as a way out and the threat 'of [more]Bengali persecution' there made him reconcile 'to a life where contempt and insult would be my share'. Added to this his conservative family did not want him to go to Calcutta for higher studies. Soon after, he became a teacher in Balasore Zila School for two years. His short stay at Balasore is very significant, for he had the company of Fakir Mohan Senapati (1843-1918) and Radhanath Ray (1848-1908), two great intellectuals of the time, there. It was a small, but powerful group of newly educated youths which was worried about the common societal and political problems and seriously discussed about them to find possible solutions. The Hinduism dominated by priesthood and marked by rituals and superstitions had frustrated them so much so that they even considered converting to Christianity. While Fakirmohan and Radhanath satiated themselves by becoming *Brahmos*(*Brahmo samajists*), a middle ground between traditional Hinduism and conversion, Madhusudan, the irrepressible youngman, later converted to Christianity.

This was a crucial period, when Orissa fell victim to the great famine of Orissa in 1865-66. The massive loss of human lives (As Fakirmohan described in his autobiography, more than 10, 00,000 people died of starvation during the famine,) and the apparent administrative apathy to the tragedy provoked the newly educated youths to look for remedies. The social and political formations began henceforth; quite a few educated youths came out to take up the societal issues; they made efforts to raise these issues and to forge unity among the people. Like

the spread of education, unity among the people was considered an essential panacea for bringing general development in the society. In other words, the *Naanka Durvikhya*, as the famine was locally called, led to the emergence of a class of nationalist intelligentsia and the beginning of nationalist politics in Orissa after 1866. Madhusudan Das and his two other friends of Balasore played a significant role in it.

In 1866, indomitable Madhusudan went to Calcutta for higher studies against the wishes of his parents. His relations with his parents and family became sour once he converted to the Christianity in 1869 and married with an educated Christian girl called Saudamini Debi in 1873 at Calcutta. After losing financial support from the family he worked as a teacher in school and took up private tuitions, a profession he had been acquainted with earlier at Balasore, for self-support. Besides, he also worked as a translator (Oriya) in the Calcutta High court and made an earning for self. This struggle for self-sustenance in an unknown city like Calcutta made him self-reliant, confident and independent in thought as well as in action. The boldness, firmness and decisiveness in his personality were largely due to this.

Calcutta has contributed immensely to the making of Madhusudan and his life missions. He spent there a little over 15 yeas (1866-1881); as a self-made man he educated himself politically, intellectually as well as socially. He earned the degree of B.A., Law and M.A there by 1878. Thus, he became the first graduate, first law graduate and first post graduate from Orissa. All these instilled a tremendous amount of self confidence in him. He married there in 1873 and also lost his wife after five years of marriage in 1878. The couple had no children, which made Madhusuadan a complete loner at the family front. Later he adopted Shoilabala, his friend's daughter, got her educated and involved her in various social activities. She became a close

companion and the legal successor of him.

Because of his long stay at Calcutta and avid interest in national politics, he had a first hand grasp of the contemporary social and political stirrings in Bengal, a major political centre of the country during the period. He attracted the attention of the Christian missionaries, because he was an excellent public speaker and a devout Christian committed to the well being of the humanity as such. As a loner deserted by the family, and probably by the friends, for converting to Christianity, he found a safe social and intellectual refuge in the Christian community life in Calcutta. This was quite important, because as in Cuttack school his Bengali school mates chided him as *ude* and made fun of him, for he hailed from Orissa, a place which was considered to be very backward in the Bengal Presidency. By over looking his '*ude*' identity (a term sarcastically used for denigrating the Oriya people in Calcutta) he could have submerged himself in the socio-political life of Bengal. He was highly educated and a Christian with an upper caste and upper class social background. Besides, he had married to a Bengali lady. All these were the necessary 'qualifications' and 'passport' to take a 'dignified entry' in Bengal's socio-political life. However, he did not do that. In stead he fought for his distinct Oriya linguistic and cultural identity, and developed the social and political movements with out much public support. Further, he founded a number of institutions asserting self-respect and self-dignity. The spoof and insult he suffered from some narrow minded people in Bengal made him seriously think about the broader social and political roots of the issue. He set up a night school at Khiderpur in Calcutta for educating the children of the illiterate Oriya migrant workers. To him education meant empowerment. It was also a medium for earning social respectability, which had been almost denied to the Oriya migrants in Calcutta. The majority of such laborers were not

only poor and illiterate, but also came from 'low' social classes. Most of them used to be employed in low paid jobs during the period. Madhusudan, while leading a life of struggle himself, probably understood their plight and tried to improve their lot by using the available means.

In 1881, after a brief stint at a lower court in Khiderpur in Calcutta, Madhusudan returned to Orissa and joined the court at Cuttack. Even in Cuttack bar he had to suffer the insult and lampooning because the Bengali lawyers dominated the scene. Besides, being the first law graduate from among the native people, he was the first Oriya advocate to practice in law courts and to start from the scratch. There was a mismatch between the respect he commanded among his country men and the lampooning he suffered from among his colleagues in the court. This got him intimately involved in public life probably as a way out. He formed various social organizations such as the Orissa Young men's associations, (1881), *Utkal sabha*, (1882), Utkal Union Conference, (1903), Utkal *Prajapratinidhi Sabha* (1911) and the *Utkal Sahitya Samaj* (1903). He also patronized theatre, art and music and cooperative movement which helped usher in modern society and politics in Orissa. Madhusudan Das was striving for self-respect and dignity for his people. It was no more a personal fight for him.

One of the prime objectives of all these organizations was to demand the general welfare of Orissa. As the different Oriya speaking tracts were under various presidencies and provinces, the people had been artificially a minority suffering crises of identity in different spheres of the society. The Orissa Division comprising Cuttack, Puri and Balasore formed a part of the Bengal Presidency, while the Ganjam Agency comprising the southern tracts was a part of the Madras Presidency. The western Orissa centering Sambalpur had been attached to the Central Provinces. They were dominated by the non-natives in the offices as well as in

trade and business. This had led to a serious social crisis affecting the people, especially the emerging middle classes. They had no effective voice anywhere. Hence, amalgamation of the different Oriya speaking tracts under one political administration had been a main demand of Madhusudan and his contemporary Orissa nationalist friends and their organizations. Later on they demanded a separate Orissa province on linguistic and cultural basis, which came into being in April 1936.

The Late 19th Century witnessed the emergence of early nationalism in various parts of the country. The early nationalists critiqued the 'un-British' like exploitative nature of the British colonial rule and demanded general welfare of the people through petitions and memorandums, etc. They gave long speeches in the Councils and indulged in writings in the press; they also held public meetings to put forth their view points. Unlike in the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's there were no mass demonstrations or *hartals*, no 'non-co-operations' or 'civil disobediences' against the government during this phase of freedom struggle; nor had the tradition of courting arrest and leading demonstrations begun among the nationalists. They believed that they could compel 'the modern, civilized and democratic British rule' to shed its 'un- British' characters through regular doses of criticism and reminders.

In Orissa too Madhusudan and his nationalist friends used these means for taking up the local and regional issues. The Utkal Union Conference (UUC), translated as *Utkal Sammilani* in Oriya, in its annual sessions between 1903 and 1920 passed long resolutions demanding amalgamation of the Oriya speaking tracts, development of agriculture and industries, spread of education and funds for technical and women education, etc. It urged the local affluent classes like the princes and zamindars to take up these activities in their respective areas of influences as

social responsibilities. Besides, it organized agricultural and industrial exhibitions for promoting local crafts and industries.

Madhusudan served as a member of the Bengal Legislative Council between 1896 and 1911. After the formation of the province of Bihar and Orissa he remained a non-official member of its Legislative Council between 1912 and 1926. He also represented Bihar and Orissa in the Imperial Legislative Council during 1913 and 1916. As a legislator he took up various local and national issues such as the Indianization of administration at the higher level, separation of executive from judiciary, revocation of salt laws, defence of India, women education, promotion of local industries, extension of agriculture, funds for local self-government and lowering of excise duty on Indian goods and hiking of tariff duty on the imports for protecting the *swadeshi* industries. He believed, highlighting these public issues in the official forums was a national endeavor. He had faith in the British rule. By bringing the issues to their notice he hoped to get the problems addressed and redressed by the government. Like other moderate and liberal nationalists of his time he was very clear about the role he played as a legislator. He felt, the role was that of an interpreter between the authorities and the people. While defining the role of non-official legislators, who were not paid due attention by the authorities, he said in the Bengal Council in 1902:

> ... I have always considered myself here as a humble interpreter of the Government and the people I represent. That is the right view of the position of a non-official member; it quadrates with the laws and rules which regulate the proceedings of this Council and harmonizes best with our experience. As an interpreter his duties are to communicate to the Government the wishes and want of the people, and to see that the

intensions of the Government are not misunderstood by the people.

(*Proceedings of the Council of Lt. Governor of Bengal*, 1902, dated 4 April 1902, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, p.32)

Like other early nationalists of the period Madhusudan strongly believed that the British would develop India the way they had developed their own country. He said, 'Remember you will have to compete with Europe. It is a war in which the odds are against you. And in this matter do not expect any help from Government; if it comes, receive it thankfully...and the help that comes from the Indian Government will not make up the odds against you.' Even when the nationalists became overtly critical of the Government and started the non-cooperation agitation during the Gandhian phase he did not change his opinion and remained a liberal throughout. In 1921 he even became the Minister of Local Self-government department in the Bihar and Orissa Government and earned the wrath of the Congress people. Because of such stubbornness he lost control over the UUC. The changes in the political scenario and the radicalization of the new generation of the nationalists probably did not affect his understanding of the British rule in India. Finally the UUC founded by Madhusudan in 1903 merged in the Congress in December 1920 against the wishes of the founder. Further, in 1928, he welcomed the 'Simon Commission' with the hope of realizing the long standing demand of statehood for Orissa, when the entire nationalist community in the country had unitedly boycotted it. However, despite having so much trust on the Government a native representative was neither trusted nor paid any attention by the Govt., he fervently complained in 1902. He said:

Is it really a useless waste of time to give a few minutes

> during the term of two years to the interpreter of the wishes and wants of people? Should it not be the duty of wise and sympathetic Government to know the wants and wishes of people, although it may not be in its power to grant ready and immediate relief? A wise *paterfamilias*, anxious to enforce loyal and loving obedience to his children, should be attentive to the hostile critics even when their demands are wild and far beyond his powers and means. *(ibid)*

In order to highlight the social and political issues, especially the issues concerning the development of Orissa he visited England twice in 1897 and 1910. At a personal level this visit to England also enabled him to avail advanced medical treatment there during the tour. There he discussed the Orissa issue with the leaders and intellectuals and brought Orissa to the lime light. From England he wrote a number of long letters about his understanding of the West in the Oriya vernacular press. He believed that 'England was the grandest country inhabited by the noblest of nation on earth'. Further, he observed that 'the English people have no favourable opinion of the Indians....It is absolutely necessary that every Indian who visits this country should live an honest and scrupulously moral life. He should by his life and in his dealings with the people show that the Indian has a clean heart under a dark skin'. (Debendra Kumar Das, ed., *Madhusudan Das : the Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.-236-37) Thus, as in the Council, during his tour he became an interpreter of the West in Orissa and a representative of Orissa and India in the West. Everywhere he earnestly strove for the dignity and self-respect of his people, without which universal brotherhood would be an unachievable object.

Madhusudan's range of activities was not confined to the councils, meetings and discussions alone. As a champion

of women's education he established a girl's school at Cuttack in 1908. Earlier he had sent his adopted daughter Shoilabala Das to England for training so that she could develop the school in an ideal manner. In 1888 he set up a stage at Cuttack for popularizing modern drama in Orissa. In 1903-04 he started Orissa Sports Association for encouraging sports among the youths. He was intimately involved in the publication of several journals both in Oriya and in English such as *Utkal Dipka, The Oriya* and *Star of Utkal*, etc. In 1897 he set up a workshop called The Orissa Artwares and Art school for the training and employment of local artisans. Nearly 150 artisans worked there. As a great advocate of *swadeshi* and modern industries in 1904 he started a leather factory. Known as the Utkal Tannery this factory gave dignity to its workers, who were socially downtrodden, and tried to inculcate a sense of dignity in their labor. It also produced good quality shoes and other leather products which were even exported to Europe. However, because of lack of proper management the factory suffered heavy losses and was finally auctioned in 1927. The imminent decline of Utkal Tannery was so painful to Madhusudan that he enrolled himself as a primary member of the Congress (particularly after the launching of the Non Cooperation movement he had distanced himself from the Congress) in 1924, and solicited the help of Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders such as Gopabandhu Das to save the dying industry. In 1925 at the age of 76 he even went to Ahmedabad to meet Mahatma Gandhi and brought him to Cuttack to find out a way to salvage the Utkal Tannery. The issue of dignity of labour popularized by Mahatma Gandhi in the 1920's was inherently there in Madhusudan and the outcome was the Utkal Tannery. The people eking out their living on leather work are placed at the lowest rung of the social ladder in India. Through the Tannery Madhusudan emphasized the dignity of these leather workers and had developed a

grand plan, in which these workers would bring glories to the nation. However, despite Gandhi's avid interest and personal appeal, the tannery could not be revived.Further, as the vice-chairman of Cuttack District Board in 1887 he had played a vital role in the opening of several primary schools and in the training of teachers. Because of his consistent efforts the primary teachers under the District Board could enjoy a significant hike in their monthly salary. This he considered to be a great achievement at a time, when other moderates (he would take the name of Gopal Krishna Gokhale) were 'only making hue and cry.'

Madhusudan's love for Orissa was beyond question, yet this in no way diminished his receptivity to the outside world. His outlook was not narrow and sectarian in either approach or attitude. He believed that Orissa was an inseparable part of India. However, she lagged behind other provinces, especially her close neighbor Bengal. He strongly felt that such backwardness and underdevelopment of one state would adversely affect the growth of India as a nation. In 1904 he wrote:

> Mother Utkal is neither a rival nor an enemy of mother India. Mother India has a number of children. Each one of them needs care of varied nature. When one child may be breastfed while sitting on the mother's lap, another child may be reprimanded for his evil doings. Further, from the third one the mother may solicit counseling and suggestions. This means the mother changes her attitude and approach as per the child's needs. Mother Utkal is that soft form of the mother [India] which tenderly breastfeeds her child. This is only one incarnation of mother India. This is only one of the various forms of India.

(Utkal Sammilani, *Utkalshree*, Balasore, 2005, p.3)

While deliberating on the issue of national and regional development in the UUC in 1908, he argued, 'There is little difference between Mother Utkal and Mother India. If a particular part of the body has any ailment it needs special care and treatment. Only such treatment makes the body fully well. Treatment of Utkal [giving priority to the Orissa issues] will lead to the overall development of India.' (Quoted in Suryanarayan Das, *Desaprana Madhusudan*, Cuttack, 1971, p.299)

Madhusudan felt aggrieved that his understanding of national and regional development was not shared and appreciated by other nationalists, especially by the Bengal leaders. Instead he was accused of promoting narrow provincialism in Orissa. While focusing on this he wrote to Aurobindo Ghose in 1908, 'You people, I mean the Bengali leaders, have been objecting to the partition of Bengal. But, Orissa is vivisected since long; it needs to be unified. You people seldom raise this issue. The principle, in which the partition of Bengal is resented, be applied for unifying Utkal. Only then the provinces would wholeheartedly fight for the development of India. How would India be integrated if one province develops and the other falls apart?' (Quoted in Suryanarayan Das, *Desaprana Madhusudan*, Cuttack, 1971, p.298)

Like the Orissa issues, the development of other backward communities such as the depressed classes and the Muslims also attracted his attention. Expressing deep concern at the disdainful attitude of the society towards the depressed classes he said in 1916:

> Evolution is very slow, and the traditions and customs die hard, but there stands the man of the depressed class. What is his position? He is away from the Hindu society in the midst of a desert. Why he is there? Because at sometime or other he was cast away as the sweepings of society; and he does not receive the same treatment

> which even sweepings in thriving cities do... Here these people live on the outskirts of a village; they are deprived of every opportunity of seeing the example of a good moral healthy life; they are deprived of what is a very powerful deterrent in the human nature, and that is the approval of respectable society. I believe, sir, that the censure of society is more powerful deterrent than the sentence of a judge.

(*Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India*, 1916, dated 16 March 1916, pp.379-381, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, p.278)

Madhusudan was a faithful Christian. He once presided over the All India Christian Conference at Allahabad in 1915. He also helped in the organization of the conference on a few other occasions. However, this did not deter him from espousing the cause of communal harmony. As a great votary of secularism he strongly opposed schism and said, 'so long as we do not introduce schism, religion, every religion, can be considered as most sacred by a believer of another religion.'

(*Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Bihar and Orissa*, 31 March 1921, pp.1051-1052, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, p.352)

In 1887 the Government made a plan to take over the management of the Puri Jagannath temple. This was construed as blatant interference in the religious matters of the local Oriya people. More than the religion, it was Puri temple and Jagannath which had given an identity to Orissa and the people there since medieval times. Now there were strong resentments against the government move. Madhusudan took up the case on behalf of the Puri princely

family, which had been traditionally bestowed with the responsibility of temple management in Puri. He relentlessly fought against the government plan in the court as well as in the media. Finally he also won the suit. It saved the honour of the people of Orissa, for the foreign intervention in the religious matters could be halted for the time being. It was a grand psychological victory over the invincible British rule. Madhusudan was hailed as a great fighter, who defeated the British in their own institution (court), and was popularly called *'Madhu Barrister'* henceforth. A popular nationalist saying runs as follows: *Patha padhibi, okila hebi, Madhu Barrister sange ladhibi.* (I shall study, become a *vakil* and extend help to Madhu Barrister in the fight.) Despite being a Christian he declared it (the government's plan) to be unworthy of a Christian Government and reminded that it was against the policy which Government had promised to pursue in India with regard to the religious issues. Like other devout Christians he might have had strong objections to some of the temple practices during the period, but he would not tolerate any undue government interference in the religious matters of the people. The victory in the temple suit made Madhusudan the symbol of regional identity and self-respect in Orissa. His Christianity never stood in its way.

Madhusudan was a nationalist of first order. In his scheme of thought nationalism and Christianity never clashed with one another. As a Christian he believed that the duty of an Indian Christian was to merge in the nation. While passionately addressing the All India Christian Conference at Allahabad in 1915, he suggested:

> 'Do not expect any credit for what you have done for the nation. Be prepared to do all you can, but do not expect any credit. Be merged in the nation, be lost in the nation. You have no independent individual life without the nation; your life must belong to the nation. I see the river Ganga there. It has been winding its

course for hundreds of miles receiving worship and homage from millions of Hindus. That is the individual homage. The river goes on winding its course and it falls into the ocean which is the picture of the nation. It loses its individuality when it joins the sea. There is no Ganga or yamuna there. The homage paid to Ganga and Yamuna is no more to be paid there. If you want to increase the power of your nation, lose your individuality. Then you will see the power of the nation rise in waves. You may be lost, but, you have actually contributed to the power, to the durability and to the glory of your nation.'

(The lecture is appended in Debendra Kumar Das, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The man and His missions*, Rourkela, 1998, p.212)

The nation had always been there in the mind of Madhusudan. Neither his Christian identity, nor his Oriya regional identity deterred him from pursuing the cause of Indian nation. In 1885 when Surendra Nath Banerjee organized the annual Conference of Indian Association at Calcutta, it was Madhusudan, who extended all cooperation. Between 1886 and 1912 he attended the Congress sessions not less than 17 times. He invariably organized public meetings to welcome the Orissa delegates after they returned from the Congress sessions. In these meetings the Congress resolutions were discussed and deliberated in great detail and the Congress message disseminated among the people. In 1912, when the Congress was held at Bankipur in Bihar, Madhusudan addressed the students there. As a Legislator he always aligned with other fellow nationalists for taking up issues concerning the general welfare of India. When 'the non-cooperation-*wallahs*' accused him (and other 'cooperators') as people 'who have assembled in Satan's workshop to work out the destruction, the ruination of their

country', fervently he questioned, 'Is not the Council Chamber the place where the first and the greatest politician in India, Dadabhoy Naorji, said that the battle of India should be fought? Is not the Council Chamber the place where men like Gokhale, of revered memory, said that we must play our part and make every effort to obtain the freedom of India? Is that not the place where we should fight out the battle for this country? Am, I, after having been associated with this Council work for over 30 years, ... be accused of working out the destruction of my country in this chamber?'(See N.K.Sahu and P.K.Mishra, ed. *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980,p.344.) He sincerely believed that he was fighting for the freedom of India through the Council.

In fact, Madhusudan was a great nationalist who believed that by pursuing the Orissan interest and by the taking up the issue of Oriya linguistic and cultural identity he was strengthening the foundations of Indian nation, which was on the making during the period. He did not consider the regional interests to be antipathetic to the national interests. His Christian identity also never stood in the way of his nation. He extended all cooperation to the Government, for he probably wrongly believed that the latter sincerely desired the development of India and that would be possible only when there was mutual cooperation between the Government and the people. In his mission of nation making he also tried to mobilize the feudal and princely classes, which commanded a pivotal position in the Orissan society then. There were 26 princely states and hundreds of zamindaris. In the absence of modern industries and industrialists the princes and zamindars were the affluent class in Orissa. Further, many of them were modern educated and represented the new intelligentsia. He probably believed that any down playing of them would delay the process of nation making in India, for the national

movement greatly depended on them for funds. He came to politics at a time when the common people were conspicuous by their absence in the national movement because of various reasons. At such a critical juncture he found nó alternative, but to take the help of the British Government and the native feudal classes to achieve *Jatiya Unnati* (national development), his life mission.

In the beginning of 1920's, the country witnessed great changes in all spheres of its political life. Mass politics had begun; after the Punjab massacre of 1919 the anti-people nature of the British rule had become quite apparent; the people had started to challenge the authorities rather fearlessly. In Russia the autocratic Czarist regime had been over thrown by the peasants and workers under Bolshevik leadership. All these changes had impacted the nationalists in India. The fear for the rulers was vanishing; the common people were coming to the forefront of the struggle; the anti-people nature of the British rule was becoming conspicuous. However, Madhusudan did not change his liberal attitude to the British and gradually lost the control over the national movement in Orissa. He breathed his last on 4 February 1934, just two years before the formation of separate Orissa province on linguistic and cultural basis. He knew that the formation of Orissa was on the offing and probably died as a happy man and at a ripe age. In 1881 he made an entry into the political scene as a strong liberal to the Government. That was the tradition of nationalist politics in the country then. In course of time there were many changes in the political scene. Even Madhusudan did not remain stagnant in his understanding and his attitude towards the Government and the general mass of people. In 1911 he formed the *Praja Pratinidhi Sabha* as a representative organization of the ryots to presurize the government for conceding the demands of the common people. While criticizing the Dyarchy introduced since 1919 he said in 1923,

'If you compare Dyarchy to a musical instrument, the minister is playing on it, but the instrument is held by the Secretary who belongs to a reserved service....Ministers are engaged in the nation-building departments, agriculture, public health, etc., while the milk goes to the Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council who collect revenue.'(See N.K.Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Lagislator,* p.513) His frustration with the Government ultimately led him to resign from the provincial ministry in March 1923. However, the pace of change was so slow and so subtle in him that the second generation of nationalist leadership wanting radical changes could not accept him as its leader. Thus, at least outwardly Madhusudan remained a liberal throughout and appeared 'outdated' with the change in time.

To conclude, today after over 75 years of his death, when we analyze the historical significance of Madhusudan Das or any such personalities, we must not overlook the time and the space in which they lived and worked. For example, when Madhusudan took interest in societal affairs in early 1880's there was no such mass upsurge unlike in the 1920's. The foundations of modern politics were being laid then. After the suppression of the Revolt of 1857 for the first time the new educated class had begun to lead the nation, but the feudal classes, which held the leadership until then, had not been completely wiped out from the social scene. In a state like Orissa, which was not a state then, but an un-amalgamated tract under different provinces and Presidencies and inhabited by people speaking a common language and sharing a common cultural heritage, there were many princely states and a large number of small and big zamindari estates. In the absence of modern industries and education these princes and zamindars were the only affluent middle class who could be the possible spine of any social or political movement in the state. Many of them

were new educated, but were fully feudal in their attitude. Madhusudan worked amongst them and tried to take their help and cooperation in the national work. He also tried to convince them of their social responsibilities. He was a democrat, but had to work with these feudal elements (and the authoritarian alien rulers). As he was a great optimist he took many initiatives to bring them out of narrowness and sectarianism, which had made them deeply unpopular in their states. Thus, when the zamindar of Kanika, Rajendra Narayan Bhanj, who was also a close confident of Madhusudan, went to visit England in 1910 on his advice to have first hand experience of the social changes, he (Madhusudan) wrote many highly philosophical letters to him suggesting to see the vastness of ocean and to feel the oneness in life and humanity. He wrote:

> The human soul comes from God – from Heaven; it comes as an image of God. It has no nationalism or nationality just as rain water has no colour. But when this heavenly soul is born in this world, it grows amidst the customs, manners, ideas and the standard of civilization prevailing at the time in the country or village where the individual soul is born. Like the rain drops human beings take their colour from the country where they live....Humanity is the sea where the human souls meet without their colour.... We must work for the well being of our race and nation, but we must so work that the race might join in the march of humanity in which we as an individual must join whether we wish it or not, for that is the law of our nature, the will of our creator and the design of human constitution.

(The letter is appended in Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan : His Life and Missions*, pp.259-260.)

It would probably be a travesty of facts, if such a great

humanist is drubbed as a sectarian regionalist or a parochial leader or a narrow nationalist or a blind ally of British imperialism in India. Madhusudan worked for the people as per his understanding. His conversion to Christianity at a very young age, his strive for the unity of Orissa, his allegation of Bengali highhandedness in Orissan society, his taking up of the Puri temple issue despite being a devout Christian, his participation in the Council politics, his initiatives in founding the various institutions and his associations with the princely classes and the government officials were parts of his elaborate and grand scheme of national development during the period. Probably he could not see any contradiction between the rulers and the ruled of his time. He could see the chain of exploitation of which the British were the beneficiaries. But, as a devout Christian he believed that it was temporary. Once the intelligentsia brought the realities to the notice of the British through the media and the Councils, justice would prevail. He hoped to bring national development by taking the help and cooperation of the British and the other native ruling allies and feudal elements. Later on he could see the futility of his scheme and tried to change. But, the pace of change was very slow.

Today when one looks at Madhusudan Das' political understanding and scheme of actions, there might be several contradictions. But, they were not un-natural because the ideas were at a very formative stage. Despite many such short comings it is his commitment to the people and the society, which would place him as a great leader of our time and country. Instead of seeing the uniqueness in his thought and actions, if he is compared with others either as a smaller or a bigger nationalist leader, it would be nothing but a kind of negation of his significance in history. Probably that would also be a kind of a-historical treatment of him, who earned fabulously as a lawyer, and spent all his earning for national

work. He had become such a penniless person towards the close of his life that in 1927 he was declared an insolvent. The Utkal Tannery, his pet project, which emphasized both dignity of labour and *Swadeshi* was also auctioned the same year.

Madhusudan had worked against many odds. When he converted to Christianity his family and parents severed their relations with him. Only after five years of marriage, he lost his wife and remained a loner throughout. He was so highly educated that he could have been a top ranking leader in Bengal too. However, he preferred to maintain his Oriya identity and to be ready to face the humiliation from the dominant Bengali leadership. Single handedly he challenged the 'problematic vision' of some contemporary nationalists, which down played the regional stirrings of the time. Started as a feeble voice this regional outcry became stronger over a time. It could be evident from the fact that the Congress recognized the formation of its provincial units on linguistic and cultural basis in 1920; and the separate state of Orissa was constituted in 1936. Through out his life he suffered from acute abdominal ulcer and was at times feared by his friends and juniors for his short temper and irritative nature. His outspokenness and harsh comments also made him a little friendless in personal life. All these had greatly impacted his personal and political decisions. In other word, these aspects cannot be overlooked, when we try to make an analysis of his thought and actions.

There exists a large number of biographical writings on Madhusudan Das, and he continues to be an object of study. This shows the academic interest in and the social relevance of the leader. Most of these writings are in Oriya. They together speak volumes about his life and missions. Some of these writings are:

- Nabakishore Das, *Jatiya Gourab Madhusudan*, Vidyapuri, Cuttack, 1995

- Debendra Kumar Dash, (ed), *Madhusudan Das : The Man And His Missions,* Pragati Utkal Sangha, Rourkela, 1998
- N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, (ed.), *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator (His Speeches),* Pragati Utkal Sangha, Rourkela, 1980.
- Ganeswar Mishra, *Chintanayak Madhusudan,* Salepur, 2006.
- Nabakishore Das, *Utkal Gourab Madhusudan,* Utkal Sammilani, Bhubaneswar, 1999 (Second Edition)
- Surendra Mohanty, *Kulabriddha,* Lark Books, Bhubaneswar, 1978.
- Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das : His Life and Achievements,* Pragati Utkal Sangha, Rourkela, 2002.
- Surya Narayan Dash, *Desaprana Madhusudan,* Grantha Mandir, Cuttack, 1971.
- Surendra Mohanty, *Satabdira Surya,* Lark Books, Bhubaneswar, 1970.
- Surendra Mohanty, *Madhusudan Das,* National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1972.
- Shoilabala Das, *Life of Madhusudan As seen by Many Eyes,* Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, 1956.
- Shoilabala Das, *A Look Before and After,* Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, 1956.
- Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words,* Kala Vigyan Parishad, Cuttack, 1958.
- Nabakishore Das, *Madhubabunka Odia Vaktruta O Geeta,* Cuttack, 1934.
- Surasingha Patnaik, *Aama Madhusudan,* Aama Odisha, Bhubaneswar, 2009
- Acharya Bhabananda and Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Odisara Janaka Madhusudan,* Bhubaneswar, 2000.

In this book, 'Selected Writings of Madhusudan Das' some of the well known speeches and writings of

Madhusudan have been taken and arranged in a chronological order. As a result the writing on his childhood comes later than some other writings, because that was written at a later date. Barring a poem translated from Oriya by his colleague Pareswar Mohanty, all others were originally written in English. The selection covers the different facets of his life; from the writing about his childhood to political writings and to personal letters. Very often a prepared speech or lecture is quite well structured. No doubt it is essential, but may not be sufficient for historical assessment of a personality. In other word, a personal letter or note from the diary is equally important for situating the said personality in a historical process. That is why some personal letters have also been taken here. Similarly, apart from the political writings, other varieties of writings could also be very useful to understand the leader. The main objective of the book, for me, is to portray an over all picture of the leader through his lectures and writings. The format in which the writings have been selected and arranged could have been different. I mean, many other writings, which are no less important, could also have been taken here. But, there were other limitations. There could also be differences with regard to the format of this work. However, such differences would be a welcome thing, for that may lead to collection and other such selections of writings of and on Madhusudan Das. In other words, the different biographical writings and other writings, including the selected writings, portraying the life and contributions from various angles, I hope, would play a complimentary role in one's understanding of Madhusudan Das and the historical processes in Orissa during the period.

I am thankful to Prof. Bipan Chandra, a great historian himself and the Chairman of NBT, India, who has assigned me this work. I am also greatly thankful to Shiv Kumar Mishra who is looking after this project in the NBT.

Mr Surasingha Patnaik, the octogenarian researcher on Madhusudan, has greatly encouraged me for completing this work. My friends Siddharth Mahapatra, Louise Kowitch, Bijayanand Singh and Pramod Kumar Sar have been of immense help to me in this project. Debendra Kumar Dash has worked on Madhusudan and published a number of research monographs. He has helped me in different ways to complete this work. I have not only borrowed his personal collections, but also spent long hours with him to discuss about Madhusudan and the contemporary Orissan history. I am greatly indebted to him for his sincere help and cooperation. Last,but not the least Mr. Bijay Mohanty has typeset it; I thank him.

PRITISH ACHARYA

Jagannath Temple Case

[During the pendency of the Jagannath Temple case Madhusudan had published two letters in English under the pseudonym of *'A Lunatic'* in the *Letters to the Editor* column of *the Utkal Dipika* in 1887. This was the first letter. The purpose was to bring the case to the notice of the Government and the public.]

I have read a good deal about the Juggernath [Jagannath]Temple case in the vernacular and the English papers of the several presidencies of India. I think a collection of these in the form of a pamphlet will be acceptable reading to the public. One evening I was just trying to guess the real object of the Government in instituting this suit. I am neither a philosopher nor a lexicographer and I have never been able to grasp the distinction between motive and object, so pardon me, Mr. Editor, if I have wrongly used the word object. I tried to examine the several motives attributed to the Government by the different classes of the Indian population from the highest Government official to the poorest *'Chasa'*, but none of these explanations seemed reasonable to me. Some people say the object of this suit is to improve the ceremonials; this I cannot believe, for it will be unworthy of a Christian Government and opposed to the policy, which Government has always pursued in regard to religious matters. I am sure we are not going to have Hindu chaplains in the Government of India's pay. Besides, the Government of India is bound by a most serious pledge

to the Christian public both in England and in India not to revive its connection in any form with this Temple. This pledge may be read in the minutes of the Governor-General of the time, in the minutes by the Members of his Council, in the dispatches by the Court of Directors, in the letters to the representatives of Christian assemblies in India, in the returns to the House of Commons and in the speeches in the House by the Hon'ble Messrs Ingles and Kinard. I cannot believe that the object of the suit is to improve the management of the Temple. But there are many people who believe it and not only here, but even in England, some people believe this to be the object of the suit. I have heard that the matter has attracted the notice of the Christian people in England and they believe this to be the object of the suit.

Some people believe that the object of the suit is to prevent the spread of disease and consequent loss of life from the consumption of unwholesome food in the shape of stale *Mahaprasad.* I cannot believe this for I cannot understand how this can be affected. The Hindus believe *Mahaprasad* to be the most sacred food; no part of it ought to be thrown away. Pilgrims carry this sacred food thousands of miles to be given to their relatives as a most acceptable present. By the time the food reaches its destination, it becomes unfit for human food. How can any system of management in the temple at Puri prevent the consumption of unwholesome food in the Punjab or in the Bombay Presidency?

The only effectual means to prevent this evil will be the addition of a section to the Penal Code making the consumption of this unwholesome food punishable. But will the Legislature have the courage to do this?

While musing and amusing myself in this strain I fell asleep and I saw a dream. I saw Sir George Campbell hold a serious conversation with a person whose official

designation was the Settlement Officer of Khordah, but whose name I could not learn. I heard the latter point out to Sir George the difficulty of increasing the revenue of Khordah by reason of a portion of that Estate having been made over unconditionally to the Temple. Sir George seemed anxious to raise the revenue by resettlement of the Estate. The Settlement Officer was willing to carry out Sir George's orders, but how could he enhance the rents of a portion of the estate, when the other portion which had been made over to the *Rajah* of Khordah was exempted from enhancement under the terms of the deeds of transfer Sir George seemed to think that those deeds of transfer purported to be assignment of revenue and not of land and this construction seemed to please the Settlement Officer. Just at this moment I was disturbed by a sound. I woke and both Sir George and the Settlement Officer vanished. I again fell asleep and strange to say the scene changed. Sir George appeared with another gentleman, who I learnt was the Secretary of State for India. This gentleman in a very serious tone disapproved of the forced construction put by Sir George on the deeds of transfer and of the conduct of the Settlement Officer in treating the portion of Khordah covered by those deeds as much under *Khas* management as the rest of it. Here I was again disturbed by a sound which I discovered this time was caused by a big rat which had entered the drawers of a toilet table and was trying to get out.

A few minutes after I again fell asleep and I saw an altogether new scene. I saw a number of gentlemen with Sir Ashley Eden at their head sitting in solemn and serious deliberation over this Khordah Settlement question. It will not interest you to know the opinions of the several gentlemen present at this meeting, and I am not sure whether I shall be able to reproduce a dream correctly, but the resolution arrived at was that the recourse should be had to

legislation for the *purpose of removing the Rajah of Khordah, to whom a portion of this estate had been assigned over, from the management of the temple and thus get out of this difficulty in the settlement of Khordah.* It was dawn, the cock crew; I woke up, to this world of state-secrets never to be admitted again to the privilege of listening to the conversation of angels.

This dream puzzled me very much and I tried to ascertain if this dream had any reality. All that I could learn was that for some years subsequent to the transfer of a portion of Khordah to the Rajah as the Superintendent of the estate as well he realized arrears of rent by the certificate procedure, surveyed the lands, and, *in short, treated the deeds of transfer as assignment of Revenue and not conveyances of lands.*

Mr Editor, do you know anyone who could read this dream for me? Or do you know any Government official who could enlighten me as to whether this vision is a mere dream or has a corresponding reality in the red tape world.

(1887)

(Source: Surendra Mohanty, *Madhusudan Das*, Delhi, 1972.)

Bengal Financial Statement for 1896-97

'I am not sure that the discussions in this Council are altogether infructuous. If I felt convinced of that, I should hardly be inclined to be on my legs. I may say that the provision made in the budget for the opening of an agricultural class at Sibpur, I have observed with mingled feelings of thankfulness to Government and regret. I come from a part of the country where the population is mostly agricultural, and being myself a man who takes an interest in agriculture, my interest is not confined to reading reports in the newspapers, but actually being in the fields for the purpose of seeing and making agricultural experiments. I am, therefore, very much interested in the provision made for the establishment of an agricultural school. If in establishing an institution like this the object of the Government be to improve the agricultural condition of the country, I feel that nothing is more likely to defeat that object than the location of the institution at Sibpur. We do not require young men to learn the science of agriculture, who will never take to agriculture as their occupation. If the improvement of the agricultural condition of the country is to be secured, it cannot be secured by educating a number of men in agricultural science, but by inducting a number of students of the actual cultivating class to join the institution and by having an institution located in such a place where experiments can be carried on over such areas and in such circumstances as to place within the observation

of students those practical difficulties which actual cultivators experience. There is no use in making experiments in small patches of land covering only a few yards. Such experiments do not take into account those causes which crop up when the experiment is made over a large area. In matters of agriculture the area under experiment makes all the difference. When an experiment is made over a small area, one can control the effects of light, heat and irrigation, which it is impossible to control when the experiment is over a large area. I could mention many other matters which have come within my own observation and experience, but this is not the place to do so. It will be sufficient for my purpose to say that to apply the results of experience to large areas which have been acquired in small areas is useless. I was told by my friends who have come from the Agricultural College at Cirencester that I was stupid, and could not properly apply their suggestions. I may be stupid, but it is not possible to get many more intelligent men among the cultivators of the country.

'If agriculture is to be improved, it must be improved by something which would benefit the agricultural classes. I do not think it is possible in the neighbourhood of Sibpur to get a large area for experiment in such a way as would be actually useful to the cultivator. Then the fact that Sibpur is a place where living is costly, and that it is miles away from districts where we can get students from the cultivating classes, the trouble and expense of the journey, and being hundreds of miles from their houses, they are exposed to the dangers and temptations of youth – these facts will prevent many of the cultivating class from enjoying the benefits of this institution which they would otherwise do. I do not think the people of Calcutta will ever take an interest in agriculture, and if this institution is located at Sibpur, the practical result will be to close its doors against those for whose benefit it is intended, for whose interest an

agricultural class should be opened. If there is one place fitter than another for such an institution, it ought to be found in Orissa. There the population is mostly agricultural, and there a number of students from among the actual cultivating class can be had to join the institution. And, moreover, the zamindars in Orissa being proprietors of temporarily-settled estates, have no motive to improve the agricultural good of the country, because the zamindar knows that the proceeds of an improved state of agriculture do not go to his pockets alone; and where a poor zamindar has the motive he has not the means. Besides, Orissa being a temporarily-settled Province, the Government is more interested in the improvement of the agricultural condition of the country than in permanently-settled districts. The rule, Charity begins at home, is as good for the individual as it is for the Government. It will therefore be in the interest of the Government and the cultivating classes, as well as of the zamindar, that an institution like this be opened in Orissa rather than in the vicinity of Calcutta, where, perhaps, the result will be to have a number of young men who will be able to deliver elaborate lectures on agricultural science without undertaking practically to improve the agricultural condition of the people. While on this subject, I would suggest that a portion of the money allotted under the head of Education to primary education may be very well utilized for the purpose of improving – if I may so call it – primary agricultural education in primary schools, like what they have in some parts of France. I read the details in a series of lectures explaining the system which prevails in France. This can be given effect to by introducing agricultural primers into these schools and by letting each school have a little farm of its own where the boys can make their experiments upon what they read about agriculture. From my own experience, that is, from what I have seen of these primary schools the majority of the pupils come from the cultivating

class and they become cultivators themselves afterwards. It is no use cramming young men with long dissertations and with high-sounding synonyms for horses and elephants. I have seen schools where the boys will give you twenty synonyms for a horse, an elephant, or a camel.

I merely want to suggest that a portion of the allotment for primary schools may be devoted to the introduction of agricultural primers in those classes.

'The next point is as to the increase of the pay of ministerial establishments. The question has been considered from the ministerial officer's point of view. But there is another point of view. If the question were limited to the right of the ministerial officers to an increase of pay, I should not feel justified in reopening the question, especially as the appeal made by the Hon'ble Babu Surendranath Banerjee was on a previous occasion met with the reply that the Government would not be justified in paying more than private employers pay their employees. But the ministerial officers of the Government are not in the same position as private employees. They form an important part of the machinery for the administration of justice in our Courts, and no analogy drawn from the law of demand and supply, as it regulates the wages paid by private employers, can properly be applied to this class of public servants; for the latter have the custody of most valuable public documents and can easily defeat the ends of justice. If the question were only limited to the right of the ministerial officers to demand an increase of pay, on the ground of the high price of things, the Government might say that they are not prepared to grant any increase, but it should be remembered that along with this question is mixed up the other question, namely, that it affects important interests from a public point of view. The amount of inconvenience and injury to the public interests arising from the employment of an underpaid ministerial establishment ought to be taken into

consideration. And one thing more ought to be considered, namely the amount of loss accruing by the employment of under-paid ministerial establishments. I know as a matter of fact that during the last 12 years the defalcations in the Cuttack Treasury alone amounted to Rs. 50,000. The amount of revenue lost to the Government by the smuggling of Court fees in the record-room, as well as the loss to the public on account of the blackmail which these ministerial officers levy all round should also he considered. If it were possible to get an account of the amounts lost under each of these heads, I think it would show that the ministerial establishment, as it is now, has actually cost the Government and the public a great deal more than it would have cost Government by giving an increase of pay and putting the establishment on a satisfactory footing. I have known cases where documents which constitute the only title deed by which a man could show his right and title to property have been removed from the Court-room by the opposite party. As long as the record-rooms are in the hands of officers capable of such things, all attempts of the Government to secure to the people a record of rights will be simply a waste of money.

'I may be permitted to add a word with regard to the scarcity of water, in as much as I have had experience in the working of District Boards. Their efforts to give to the people a supply of water have been defeated to a very great extent by the reluctance of proprietors to let District Boards have the control over water in their tanks even when the Boards have agreed to let the owners retain the rights of fishery and other proprietary rights. Of course, as Your Honour has said, a great deal can be done by the people themselves'.

(1896)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Lt. Governor of Bengal*, 1896, dated 4 April 1896, p.153, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp. 2-5)

Letters from London

[During his visit to England (April-Nov. 1897) Madhusudan wrote a series of letters to the Editor of *Utkal Dipika* under the pseudonym, An Uriya. They were published on 17 August, 11 Sept., 16 October, 30 October and 6 November 1897. Three of these letters are reproduced here.]

FIRST LETTER

Dear Sir,

Before I left England I was requested by several men to pay a visit to old Mr. T.E. Ravenshaw and convey to him their *salams*. The following account of my visit to him will be read with interests by a large number of people in Orissa and I hope you will not grudge it some space in your paper. I did not know Mr. Ravenshaw, I never met him in India; he had left the country before I returned to Orissa. I am glad indeed that I had the honour of meeting to him. I shall give a bare account of what I saw and heard making no comments. 'Paint me as I am' said Cromwell to his painter. No doubt that shows a really worthy man to the best advantage. Mr. Ravenshaw lives in Sussex about five miles from the Three Bridges Station in the London and Brighton line. It is not far from Brighton for on a clear day you can see Brighton from the terrace of Mr. Ravenshaw's house. I went to this place on Sunday. As I came out of the train, a

short old man with grey beard walked up to me and accosting me Mr. Das?' shook hands as if we had been old friends of years. I said 'Mr. Ravenshaw I am sorry you should have come all this way. Surely I would have found my way to your house.' He replied 'But I felt it my duty to come and met you here.' We got into his brougham drawn by a pair of fine dark horses and drove off. After a few minutes he said 'Excuse my asking this question. Are you a genuine Oriya?' I said 'every drop of blood in me was of Oriya origin.' He said, 'I am very fond of your race and I would talk more freely to an Oriya than to any other man.' Then he said in Oriya 'Do you take *pika* (a varitable Oriya cigar)'. These words were followed by the offer of a cigar

Mr. Ravenshaw took me all over the house, his gardens and all over his belongings. I had straw-berries and goose-berries from the trees, lovely branches of grapes from the hot house and flowers from the green house. He took me over to his cowshed and his diary. I saw the ferrets he uses in shooting rabbits as also his ground where I saw several rabbits and pheasants. I saw his horses and judging from the good animals he has I should think he is a good judge of horse flesh and takes interest in his horses.

Inside his house, in the drawing room, I was shown some silver jewellery made at Cuttack, portions of the hookah which he used when out in India.

I – 'Do you know Mr. Ravenshaw, that the *hookas* were used in the Government House at Calcutta in the days of Warren Hastings? I saw an invitation issued from the Government House with these words in a corner, 'Ladies and Gentlemen to bring their *hookas*.'

Mr. R.— 'Oh yes, everybody smoke the hookah, we used to dine in white jacket and have the hookah under the table'.

I saw beautiful paintings of his three sons. Two of them are now in India. All his sons joined army the youngest accompanied Lord Roberts in his celebrated march in

Afghanisthan, and died from the after consequences of it.

I saw one *'Katuri'* and one knife which were made in Dhenkanal and were presented by the old *Maharaja* of Dhenkanal. I saw also two tusks and a lot of *Gurjat* [*Garjat*] weapons which were mostly from Keonjhar. Mr. Ravenshaw made kind enquiries of all the *Rajahs* of the Tributary Mahals. He made searching enquiries regarding the disturbances in Keonjhar and Nayagarh. Fortunately acted as pleader in both these cases, I could give him all the information. But I was surprised at the deep insight he must have had into the character and disposition of the people and *Rajahs* of *Gurjat*, and what was, more remarkable he had sufficient recollection of the character and disposition of individual *Rajahs* to be able at the present day to divine as to how a particular man would act under given circumstances.

The most interesting part of his house is his workshop. It is simply perfectly equipped for an amateur workshop. From the tiny tools of a watch-maker to big lathes worked by a steam engine are to be found here and Mr. Ravenshaw can repair a watch as well as make a chair and kerosene lamp. '

Mr. Ravenshaw has a strong desire to see Orissa once more. He offered to go out to India in connection with the present famine, but the Government of India said that they were not in need of any outside help. They would have saved money, saved many lives and saved many blunders, if they had availed themselves of the services of such a valuable old officer, especially as the services were gratuitous.

The old gentleman has a strong desire to see Orissa once more, and I think it will be a very good thing if his old friends in Orissa send him invitation and offer to pay his expenses. It will be graceful to the host and grateful to the guest. Mr. Ravenshaw has desired me to convey his *salams* to a number of gentlemen. This duty I must postpone till I return to Cuttack. Mr. Ravenshaw particularly requested me to, spend

a day with him before I return to Orissa, and I shall certainly avail myself of his hospitable offer; and I am sure when I return to Cuttack I shall have much to speak to you about this interesting warm hearted gentleman.

This morning I met (at a public meeting) a gentleman who was also a Commissioner of the Orissa Division for some time. I asked him his present address. His reply was 'But I shall be going away to one of these watering places in about ten days.' Is not this a contrast? I was delighted to receive the other days a few issues of *Utkal Dipika*. You have noticed with great joy the Times article on the settlement of Orissa. It seems to have inspired new hopes in you. A friend from Cuttack writing to me about the settlement in Orissa refers to this article in the same strain. You have no ideas about the influence of Times. But in London it is a news paper and does not carry more influence than that. I am deeply interested in the permanent settlement of Orissa, but that subject I must receive for private correspondence.

London — Yours truly
(12 July 1897) — An Uriya

SECOND LETTER

Sir,

You hardly know what a large number of Indians are there in London. Most of them are students. I have been very much impressed with the absolute necessity of a house where they could be lodged together. They see a good deal of each other and also of the dark side of London life. They live scattered all over London, consequently those who are interested in them, and whose occasional visits would be of immense benefit to them, do not see anything of these young men. Gentlemen like Lord Stanley, Sir Charles Elliot, Mr.

Lultman Johnson, Sir John Phear and, I suppose, many more, whose sympathies in this direction I have not had opportunities of knowing, will be always glad to meet these young men if they could be lodged in one house. These young men will occupy the highest offices open to Indians. Their education here, especially the moral parts of it, should be such as would impress them with the responsibilities of their position. They owe a duty to their country i.e. they ought to present to their countrymen a higher standard of life. On the other hand they should not bring discredit on their education in England – the grandest country inhabited by the noblest nation on earth. The English people have no favourable opinion of the Indians. This impression is shared more or less by all classes of people. The only way to remove this impression is to prove its falsity by our life and dealings with the people. The work is easier among the higher classes with the exception of a certain class whose interest it is to see that the people of England or their representatives in the Parliament should not interfere in Indian matters. But this latter class forms a minority who need not be reckoned with. But to remove the unfavourable impression from the trade people of London and to induce them as well as the people in the country to take interest in Indian affairs is a gigantic work. But there is no chance of our ever accomplishing this if the visitors from India give fresh reasons for unfavourable opinion. It is absolutely necessary that every Indian who visits this country should live an honest and scrupulously moral life. He should by his life and in his dealings with the people show that the Indian has a clean heart under a dark skin. I do not mean to say England is the land of angels only; by no means, but need not waste our energies in preaching against English vice. One has to visit Hyde Park of Sunday evening to see how much their own countrymen give it to them. You can always get 50, 60 or 100 people to talk to. One can always get much

help from the non-conformist ministers in getting up meetings where you can talk to the people. This no way costs some money, but that is very trifling considering the good, one does to his country. If the money that is spent in agitations in India were spent in this direction India would have had many more friends than she has now. I have had opportunities of talking over Indian matters to several M.P.s. Most of them are very good Christian men. They are willing to take up one or two matters, and this too they will do if it comes at a time convenient to them. There is a sort of division of labour among them. A certain numbers study a subject, the others do not at all know anything about it. Most of the members do not remain in the house during discussions. But they all rush to their seats at the sound of the division bell and vote for or against the things. This happens almost daily during the dinner hours. It was so almost every evening I dined there, and I dined there pretty frequently within the last five weeks. August is the month when all people go away for holiday making. End of July is the end of London season. All the rich and influential people of London have already cleared out and the House of Commons when meet this evening, will not have more than 20 or 25 members, and by these the Indian budget is to be discussed. I do not believe that we shall be able to secure a majority unless the people extend sympathy to India. When that is secured then representatives in Parliament will be obliged to take interest in Indian matters. I shall illustrate my remarks referring to a little incident which occurred quite recently. The scene of the incident was in Sheffield. A retired Anglo-Indian on addressing a gathering gave the Indians a black character. One man in the assembly got up and interrupted him by remarking in indignant tone 'We know one Indian, he is not much of a man look at, but I wish you English gentlemen were as good as him.' I was not present at this meting but the post brought me an account of the

incident from a friend. I quote the words. They show our friend was not a very educated man. But it is just class of people whose sympathies and good opinion it should be our object to secure. The Indian budget will be presented this evening. They will begin at 9.30 A.M. and for what I have heard from several members who are going to speak I should not be surprised if they continue till 3 P.M. I will send you some account of it next week. While I am writing this the post bring me a ticket of admission into the house, 'With Lord George Hamilton's complements.' ....Nobody near the discussion. I had made arrangements with an M.P. friend to go there tonight, but this is an additional reason. The arrests at Poona have created great excitement among some members from Ireland and some of them are going to move a resolution for a full extension of the English constitution to India. I cannot with propriety give you the names now, but you may expect an account of it a week after. Tomorrow's issue of the Times is sure to have the speeches and as the Indian mail leaves tomorrow you may see something of the discussion in that paper which will reach India at the same time as this. But the reports in the News papers are not to be trusted. The Times is a strongly conservative paper. It reports only the best arguments of the conservative party and omitting all that is good in the speeches of the Liberal party. I am certain no immediate practical good will come out of tonight's discussion but I believe they will carry one or two motions. One motion I know has the sympathy of some conservative members as well. The question of women's suffrage is of great importance to us. They are fighting hard for it, and I have no doubt they will succeed in it. The women of England are in full sympathy for India and when they get their suffrage I am sure the Indian budget will not be presented to empty benches. I wrote you on the previous occasion that some of the ladies who are the leaders of the 'Women's Liberal

Federation' are persons of superior intellect of unparalleled perseverance and wonderful strength of resolution. I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Josephine Butler who is admitted on all hands to be the most wonderful woman of England. I expect to meet her at a committee meeting tomorrow. Lady Carlyle also is very much interested in India. She is now in Scotland. I hope to go to Scotland next week to see her. The Countess of Warwick who is the leader of fashion of London is a warm advocate of female education in India.

I always thought that the legal status of the Native Christian community of India was not satisfactory. The existing legislation regarding them is obscure, defective and unfair. It was of no use in talking over those things in India. I have been promised support from many quarters and what is most important from the India Office also. One of the members of the India Council who is an eminent lawyer, has worked very hard on this matter. Even on Tuesday last, that is day before yesterday (when everybody in the India Office was exceedingly busy) he gave me nearly two hours of his valuable time In discussing how we ought to lay the matter before the Government of India. The details will be known when I return to India and set myself to work out the thing.

I think I should close this letter with a few words about Sir Charles Elliot. I have been twice to his house since I wrote to you last. He is looking very much better, fully ten years younger. You know Lady Elliot was always amiable and exceptionally nice; this had made Sir Charles quite equipped. This constitutes half of these social virtues. While in India some of his friends used to say he had a good heart with a somewhat rough exterior, I have no doubt that is so. The official mantle is off and now you see the man. He is very much interested in the young Indians here and has promised his support to any scheme to provide a good home to these

young men. I know Sir Charles was a good Christian man but I had no idea of the great interest he takes in the mission work in India. He seemed to attach much importance to the kind reception which the London Boards of Directors of the several missions in India gave me. Of course I valued it very much though not without a felling that did not deserve it. But I should not have thoughts from what I knew of Sir Charles in India that he would lay such stress on it. These shows how incorrect may be an opinion based on observation of the official career of a man. Sir Charles made very kind enquiries of the Tributary Rajas of Orissa. I gathered from his conversation that he had spoken to Lord George Hamilton about me long before I called on him. This was very kind of him and shows that he is a friend of Orissa. Talking of the National Congress he remarked that we Indians complain against laws on certain matters though they are not half as hard as the corresponding laws on the same subject in England. In referring to the Arm's Act he said that he had to pay a guinea annually for keeping a gun? And that he had been fined 7 shillings the other day for having allowed his dog to go out unmuzzled.

There is a good deal of excitement here in connection with the Poona murders. I am sorry for Sir W. Wedderburn; he suffered a good deal and that was so because he believed Professor Gookle. I am glad that Sir William expressed his regret to the House on the earliest opportunity and the House received his explanation in very good spirit. I enclose an extract from the Times. But the cause of India must suffer from the conduct of men like Mr. Gookle. There is a great excitement here in connection with the revival of C.D.A in India. I have received a heap of papers in connection with Mr. H.J. Wilson, M.P. He was in the Opium Commission and so you may remember his name.

I was glad to learn they have given a Rai Bahadur to our friend Babu Jogesh Chunder [Ray]. He was very much

willing to take up the Vice-Chairmansip of the District Board when his predecessor in office resigned it. I am very glad that they have appreciated the hard work he has done and is doing. If the local officers repose confidence on the non-official members and recognise good works, the local self-government institution in Indian would show steady progress.

London
5th August, 1897

Yours truly,
An Uriya

THIRD LETTER

Sir,

The prospect of enjoying the instructive company of the scholar who has done more to place facts and figures regarding India before the English public than any man in the present century - the author of the interesting History of Orissa, - the well-known 'Indian Affairs' in the journalistic and political circles of London - would be worth any amount of trouble and traveling to any Indian. Add to this the hospitality of Lady Hunter who always has a smile and a kind word expressed in a sympathetic tone for any Indian; think of the 'literary repast' as Charles Lamb would have called it, you may have in those ancient seats of learning and seats of ancient learning— the Colleges of Oxford which lie in your way to "Oaken Holt", and you will pardon me if I congratulate myself in having been the lucky participator in all these good things on Monday last. These institutions— the Colleges, have blunted the scythe of the time; Time flies over them to enhance and not to diminish their value. To turn black into grey is the work of 'Time' on the frail human figure, but here figures once white have turned black with age. Time which severs all bonds of friendship and ties of

relationship has been powerless against the fellows of these Colleges, for when separated by death from the rest of world they lie together in their graves in the cloisters. While thousands of men have gone forth from these institutions and have revolutionized public opinion in every department of life it is remarkable how these institutions have retained their pristine condition. The repairs done in recent years have not received the finish which modern art is capable of giving. While I stood in the hall of the Divinity School, with my eyes greedily feasting on the fine carving in the ceiling, my imagination almost involuntarily raised before me the Temple of Juggonath at Purl. How I wished that those who were responsible for the bright English paints on that edifice, which Lord Northbrook called a most 'wonderful work of architecture' could visit these institutions and learn the lessons which ... to this Hall is called the market. What's a name! And yes the name has been studiously presented to show that in the reign of Henry VIII it was used for that purpose for a short time. Our ancestors had a great regard for everything ancient. The European nations have feeling and they cultivate it. But alas! We are losing that precious feeling, which is virtue; it it closely allied to the feeling one has to his ancestors. But I fear I am digressing. In my last letter I wrote to you about the Indian students in London. I have since learnt that the authorities of the University of Oxford and of Cambridge have appointed competent gentlemen of Indian experience to advise and guide the Indian students. At Oxford this duty is entrusted to Sir William Markby K.C.I.E. — a retired judge of the High Court of Calcutta and at Cambridge this duty is undertaken by Mr. E.B. Cowell, at one time the Principal of the Sanskrit College at Calcutta. But unfortunately the Indian students do not seek their advice and avoid their company till they have seen the worst of London and London has seen the worst of them. There have been cases where the Secretary

of State for India had to provide funds for their passage back to India. I was shown a letter in which a young man asked an English gentleman – a perfect stranger to him, 'to get his clothes out of pawn,' for without them he could not be called to the bar to which he expected to be soon. In this letter the young man says - that his father allows him 200 pound a year, that on previous occasions he ran into debts by improper conduct and his father paid off his creditor. But his father declined to payoff his debts on the present occasion and therefore he applied to this English gentleman for help. I found the English gentleman was inclined to help him if the facts as stated were true. He made over the applicants card to me with a request to enquire into the matter. I gladly undertook the duty thinking that if any help was to be given, it should come from an Indian. These young men - I mean some of them - make themselves known as Indian Princes; that is the character in which they are known to the shop-keepers they deal with. A hair-cutter asked me the other day if I was a prince. I told him I wished I had been born a prince for at my age I would have developed into a king. This sad state of things called for a remedy.

I forgot to mention that in the Bodelian Library I saw a copy of Bacon's Essay presented by the author to the Duke of Buckingham. The binding of this volume is mounted with silver filigree work very much after the Indian fashion. This work is not to be seen in England now. There is a Sanskrit manuscript of Valmikee's Ramayan presented by Sir Thomas Strange 'with stitus and leaf-cutter'. The two are separate which shows that the combined stitus and leaf-cutter used in Orissa is of a more recent date. There are fragments of a Koran of 8th century in large letters of gold. I send you a reprint of the memorial for permanent settlement of Orissa. You will find in reprint the verdict of 'Indian Affairs' as it appeared in the columns of 'The Times' and the memorial as well with a few prefacatory remarks. You are not perhaps

aware, (I was not aware of it till I came here) that English public opinion of the present day is opposed to the principle of permanent assessment in this country. The opinion is supported by arguments which are as ingenious as they are elaborate. I should not enter into the discussion of the matter here. Whether the memorialists will succeed or not will depend entirely upon the construction of certain words in which the promise of a permanent settlement was made. I cannot do better than quote here the opinion of a high official, who in writing to me on the subject says, 'but on first principles I am not enamoured of permanent settlement and would not introduce it now for the first time unless we are really pledged to it.'

I leave England to-day for the continent. This letter has been written in great hurry. I hope your printer will have mercy on me and not have his full revenge on me for my bad handwriting. I am very sorry that for want of time I could not see Mr. Ravenshaw once more, but I have received a letter which shows what a looming heart the old gentleman has. I have written to him for permission to use the letter publicly and I hope he will give me permission. My object in seeking to give publicity to his letter is to give the people of Orissa an idea of the intensity of his feelings, for I feel the people will publicly reciprocate the feelings in a suitable manner if they only know Mr. Ravenshaw's feelings towards Orissa and the Uriyas.

London An Uriya
10.9.1897

(Source : Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.233-243)

Freedom from Industrial Captivity

Soil and human energy are the two main sources of a country's wealth. The earth produces certain things without the aid of man; mines and forests are results of the inherent productive power of earth. Human energy impresses these into service. Human energy in a primitive state of society aims at providing food and raiment-food to preserve the body and produce energy, and raiment to protect the body. In an advanced state of society this energy is directed to supply the luxuries of life. Every nation may be divided into two classes. This division is based on the wants of the individuals composing a nation. A large section of every nation has their attention concentrated on the necessaries of life. A comparatively smaller number seek the luxuries of life. In India the former are called the masses, the latter are known as the aristocracy or the middle class. In Orissa the Landlords whether they are Zamindars, *Rajahs* or Feudatory Chiefs form the aristocracy. The masses are the peasants and the artisan classes. The progress of a country depends on the use of all its resources to the best advantage. Such use can not be made in a country which exports the natural products or the agricultural yields and imports manufactured as the necessaries or goods luxuries of life. The human energy employed in agriculture in cutting down timbers, working mines is less valuable than that employed in the manufacture of goods for use of ornaments. It is energy in both cases, it is equally measured by its momentum, but the difference in value arises from the direction of the energy.

In the sphere of industry the direction of this energy is controlled by the aristocracy and the middle classes.

Food stuff is the first demand of a nation then comes raiment. A nation's energy is first directed to produce food stuff. The staple food of countries differs. The difference is traceable to the requirements of the climate and the productive power of the soil. In a matter of staple food India should be considered as several countries. Rice is the staple food of a large part of the population, but wheat and other grains constitute the staple food of a considerable part of India's population. When the agriculture yield of a country exceeds its demand for home consumption, there is export of food stuff. When a country exports its food stuff and imports its raiment it is not using its energy to the best advantage of the nation. Its energy is used for the benefit of other countries for want of employment in more remunerative fields. The luxuries of life open out a vast field for the employment of skilled labour of progressive value. Raiment soon passes into the class of luxuries and as soon as it passes into the classes of luxuries, the energy which is available for its production is controlled by the aristocracy and the middle classes. If the cloth, which is produced in the country, is not acceptable to the rich and the middle classes, the door for an import of foreign stuff is opened.

We often hear of the country weaver having been driven to agriculture. This has been the burden of a thousand speeches, but who is responsible for this? The blame has been laid on the Manchester manufacturer. But properly speaking the rich and the middle classes are responsible for having given preference to the foreign stuff. The constitution of society gives the rich and the middle classes a certain amount of influence, which is natural. Stuff of things should be exercised for the benefit of the society and the country. This is possible so long as the sown fabric is not impaired; once the inter dependance of the different parts of a social

fabric is destroyed by new conditions, the influence of the upper over the lower strata of society disappears, the circulation of a common interest through the several parts of the body natural on social ceases, and the whole body is paralyzed.

British Connection

Early British connection with India was commercial in its character. The acquisition of sovereignty was auxiliary to the commercial conquest of India. The acquisitionary sovereign power was necessary so that the East India Company might peacefully work their factories in India and carry on trade without later hindrances. In the pursuit of their commercial enterprise in this country, they employed the classes of Indians, who by reason of their high caste, commanded influence over society. By reason of their relation with their foreign masters, they adopted a dress acceptable to their masters. The employees of the East India Company found it to their interest to develop the foreign trade. The interest drove a wedge between the weaver and the respectable classes. The respectable classes made an effort to assimilate the European standard of living. The ruling race encouraged and approved this. The wedge grew thicker and it penetrated deeper. The ultimate result was a complete severance of the old sympathy and social co-ordination between the educated classes and the masses. At the present moment the standard of living of the two classes differs as much as England differs from India. Our educated men live in houses, where there is hardly any trace of what should be the indigenous standard of living, where there is no furniture which is found in an Oriya home, where English education has replaced the natural ideas of the necessaries and comforts of life. The educated mind is a prison guarded on all sides by foreign ideas and nations. Like us many educated men have spent the best part of their

life in injuring interests, which under the divine commission entrusted to us, we were bound to promote. This should be the overpowering ruling, if any educated man who contemplates on the present industrial condition of India. The wretched situation has been brought into relief by the demand for cloth – cloth which the poor need to cover their shame. It is necessary that the educated and the well-to do, classes, who have been accomplices to the starvation of the weaver, should make reparation for their passed unworthy, unpatriotic conduct.

No Invasion but Seize

There is now no invasion of our home by the foreign manufacturer. The import of foreign cloth has been practically stopped. Machines are not available for manufacture of cloth. India is now in a state, which may be called an industrial seize. In a stage of seize the designed people are thrown entirely on their own resources. No outside help is possible; the struggle for existence is very great, but the best energies must be put forward, the greatest sacrifice must be made to ensure success.

The State of Captivity

The soldiers who guard us in our present state of industrial captivity were recruited originally and are fed and kept at their post by us. Our foreign standard of living, our foreign caste and ideas of dresses keep guard over us in our present state of captivity. The Penal Code does not protect the life of those soldiers. The interests of the weaver class require they must be murdered. Kill those ideas and the weaver will grow as strong as before. But our ideas are of our own creation; we cherish kindly feelings towards them; we fear the disapproval, may be, the contempt of society. This may be the result of change in our dress material now. We should muster up our courage. It requires greater courage to defy

the little finger of scorn and contempt than is necessary to walk up to the mouth of the roaring canon. In the battle field the enthusiasm of a thousand comrades inspires individual courage.

Society's finger of scorn is lifted against the forlom and for speakers individual. We should like to see our will to do men using the course *dhotis* which are still made in some parts of Orissa.

(1898?)

(Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

The Bengal Financial Statement for 1902-03

'I have had occasion in previous years to congratulate the Member in charge of the Finances on presenting a Prosperity Budget. The Budget which we have now before us is not only one which shows prosperity. but it also shows ample progress and the credit of presenting a Budget which distributes the fruits of prosperity among a most deserving class of public servants, and which applies the fruits of prosperity to the introduction of much-needed reforms, I say, the credit of presenting a Budget of this character to the Council is due to the Hon'ble Mr. Kisch, to whom the thanks of the public and the gratitude of the public officers whom the Budget provisions benefit are due.

'The remarks made by non-official Members of this Council have often been called infructuous and irrelevant. During his two years of official life in this Council, there are only two days, Sir, when a non-official Member can express his views on matters of importance, and on these two days his position is a source of bewilderment to him and of disappointment to the people whose interests he represents. I believe, Sir, that a great deal of this is due to incorrect notions regarding the position and duties of a non-official Member. Some would wish to draw an unjustifiable analogy between his position and that of a Liberal Member of the House of Commons; others liken him to a statutory being lifeless as a statue, while a third class regard him as a sworn hostile critic of the Government, unworthy of its confidence. I feel it my duty, Sir, to say from my place here why I have

considered the duties of a non-official Member to be, and how I held the position here. I have always considered myself here as a humble interpreter of the Government and the people I represent. That is the right view of the position of a non-official Member; it quadrates with the laws and rules which regulate the proceedings of this Council and harmonizes best with our experience. As an interpreter his duties are to communicate to the Government the wishes and want of the people, and to see that the intentions of the Government are not misunderstood by the people. However humble, Sir, this is by no means a useless office in a country like India where the difference in education, life, thought and religion between the ruling and subject races is greater than it is in any country in the world under a foreign Government. However humble his duties as an interpreter between the Government and the people may be, they are beset with very serious difficulties. Very often a non-official Member is liable, from want of information, to suggest measures or reforms which are not acceptable to Government. It is not possible for any non-official Member to have at his command all that information, all those figures, facts and statistics, which cost the Government the services of the ablest men in the ablest service in the world – I mean the Indian Civil Service. And this information, at the command of the Government, is not available to the non-official Member, and I am sorry to say his application to have most necessary information's in sometimes most unreasonably disallowed.

'When the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Bill was before the Council, I applied for a copy of the former Bill on the same subject which had been introduced in this Council on a previous occasion and to which old Bill reference was made by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Bill in his speech when he introduced the new Bill. But my application was disallowed first by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the

Bill, and eventually by His Honour the then Lieutenant-Governor.

'Is it really a useless waste of time to give a few minutes during the term of two years to the interpreter of the wishes and wants of the people? Should it not be the duty of wise and sympathetic Government to know the wants and wishes of the people, although it may not be in its power to grant ready and immediate relief? A wise *paterfamilias is* anxious to enforce loyal and loving obedience to his children, the hostile critics even when their demands are wild and far beyond his powers and means. With these remarks, Sir, I pass on to deal with the Budget.

'I notice that there is an Imperial grant of 10 lakhs for Education. Your Honour's Government has three hungry children Bengal, Bihar and Orissa – each of which casts a wistful look at this Imperial grant. I am sure Your Honour will not deprive any one of them of his due share. I know the eldest of these is Bengal. The claims of the first-born should no doubt be preferred in matters of inheritance to those of the younger children. I congratulate Bengal on its invaluable heritage of a Permanent Settlement and on its possession of a wealthy landed aristocracy.

'But in the matter of Education. Sir, when the first-born is able to appreciate Education and to look after himself, the parental attention should be withdrawn from him, or rather it should be directed to the younger children who may stand in greater need of such attention on account of their youth and helpless condition.

'In Orissa we have only one Government College for high education, which is very badly off for accommodation for lecture rooms, and for the use of its teaching staff. I have explained the details of our want to the Hon'ble Mr. Macpherson, to whom I take this opportunity of conveying the thanks of the students for the kind attention with which he received my representation on their behalf.

'We also require some sort of Hostel for Mohammedan students. The Mohammedan community of Orissa is trying their best to raise funds and, before long, I think there will be an application made to Government for a contribution towards the establishment of a Mohammedan Hostel.

'We have also a Medical School at Cuttack, which is attached to the General Hospital there. I find, at page 26 of this Statement remarks - the first is against Medical School and the second is against Medical Hospital and Dispensaries. Under the head 'Medical School', I heard a remark that there was some saving. I have often heard it said that the Medical School and General Hospital at Cuttack is behindhand in the supply of Surgical and midwifery instruments and appliances. I do not know whether it is possible to adjust the account so as to make available a decent sum for the supply of this want; I can only add that any grant to a medical school to which there is attached a hospital is not only a grant for the noble purpose of education, but it is combined to the still nobler purpose of giving relief to suffering humanity.

'As was noticed by the Hon'ble Member who preceded me, a good portion of the Educational grant ought to be given towards education in Technical Schools.

'There is nothing in the Budget to show whether any portion of this sum is for the benefit of Primary Education, but I do sincerely hope that it is the intention and aim of Your Honour's Government to re-cast and re-model Primary Education and to give it a practical turn. Primary Education should aim at improving the condition of the artisan and agricultural classes. To attain this aim, the hand and the head must be trained together. They must be trained, so to speak, to go in double harness, each helping the other in the path of progress. But the present system of education is subversive of this very object: it produces, as it were, an aversion in the agricultural and artisan boys to engage in the occupation of

their forefathers. An agricultural or artisan boy who has been in the Primary and Upper Primary Schools considers it *infra dig* to engage in manual labour. This, Sir, is a most deplorable state of things. I do not consider it deplorable because it fills the country with disappointed and discontented aspirants for the posts of *muharrirs, gumashtas,* and petition-writers, but because it deprives the country of its most valuable resources. I think. Sir, that the richest legacy left by his ancestors to the Indian artisan is his organic adaptability to the handicraft of his ancestors – an adaptability which has been handed down from generation to generation, and which has an immense value in the commercial competition of the world. This gift of the Indian artisan to his descendants is the result of the combined action of the law of evolution and the law of heredity.

'The present system of education, by producing in the minds of these men an aversion to engage in their ancestral occupations, really robs the country of its most valuable resources. And not only that, Sir, but the present system of education is of such a character, that it educates a boy in many subjects which are not likely to be useful to him, having regard to the class from which he comes. Anybody who has visited these Primary and Upper Primary Schools and examined the boys of these schools will agree with me when I say that there are many subjects taught in these schools which might be cut down or omitted, and the time thus saved might be spent profitably in giving the boys a more practical training.

'Three or four years ago I suggested that Agricultural Primers should be introduced into these Primary Schools, and that small agricultural farms should be attached to these schools, so that these boys might gain a practical experience on these farms on the lessons which they learn from the Primers. In connection with this, I should draw Your Honour's attention to the remarks made from the chair by

your predecessor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who, speaking on the subject of the establishment of Agricultural Schools, said:

"I could say a good deal in regard to the establishment of Agricultural Schools. The Hon'ble Member did not meet with much sympathy from the Hon'ble Mr. Bolton, but my experience has been different, and I confess I have a good deal of sympathy with him. In the Central Provinces, Agriculture is taught in the village schools. We had a garden attached to many schools in which the lessons learnt from the Agricultural Primer are put into practice. Once a week the elders of the villages used to come to the school, have the Primer read to them, and discuss with the boys and the master how the lessons in the Primer quadrated with their experience, and the whole village took more interest in that subject than in any other."

'Of course, it may not be possible, it may not be expedient, or it may not be within the means of Government to attach such farms to all schools, but, at any rate, an experiment might be made by introducing them into some schools. It is not possible for Government to organize a system of teaching by which everybody can be taught his ancestral handicraft, but at the same time the system of education might be so modified, Sir, that a boy might have training of the head at schools and training of the hand at home; instead of having a whole-time education at school, he might have a training in the ancestral occupation at home, combined with book education at school, or a boy might attend school certain days of the week and attend to his ancestral craft on the other days of the week. This would, I think, attract more boys, because, with the very poorest artisan, whole-time education does not find favour; for during the whole time the boy is at school, the father is deprived of his services, and, to be deprived of the boy's services, means a loss of income. if the education of these

boys were better regulated, we would not have this deplorable result – this aversion to being engaged in the ancestral craft; but, on the contrary, the hand and the head would be trained together, and the education thus gained, instead of being a deterrent to his carrying on his ancestral occupation, would be the means of improving it in every respect. If we cannot do anything for the artisan, let us not undo what he has; if we cannot make a better artisan of him, let us not make a non-descript of him: if we cannot feed him, let us not prepare him for a life of starvation.

'In the Financial Statement before us there is an allotment in the shape of pony allowance to Head Constables. This is a liberality in the right direction. There is a sum of 4 lakhs, to which reference has already been made by the Hon'ble Member who' preceded me, for Police Reform. There is nothing to show how this grant is to be spent. I dare say the absence of details is due to the fact that there has been no time to put in the details, or perhaps that might not be necessary. I do not mean to find fault with the Financial Statement for want of these details, but what I mean to say is, that I hope it is the intention of Government to do something for the few good and honest Sub-Inspectors engaged in investigation duty. A really good Sub-Inspector is a *rara avis*, but the few who are good and honest, are very unfortunately and badly paid public officers. An honest Sub-Inspector's work is very arduous, and yet he is often treated very harshly. To begin with, his training is sad equipment for his duties. His training is confined to clerical duties; he does not get an opportunity of seeing the work of experienced detectives, and he never learns the secret as to how one should proceed in order to bring offences to light and offenders to Justice. Then, Sir, he is placed, perhaps, under a European District Superintendent, who has no experience in investigation work or in detective work; so, practically, he gets no help, no practical advice from his

immediate superior; all that he gets is a liberal dose of unparliamentary language and threats of degradation or punishment, if he does not complete an investigation as soon as his superior wishes him. I hope, Sir that it is the intention of the Government to come to the relief of these Sub-Inspectors. I shall show also that he is expected to know the law better than the Magistrate or Sessions Judge. If he omits to send up a man because he considers the evidence is not sufficient, and if the Magistrate is of opinion that the evidence was sufficient, he is punished or called upon for an explanation, though the same evidence may be considered insufficient by a higher tribunal, in which case nothing is done to the Magistrate. Then there have been cases, Sir, where he actually gets a belt supplied to him by the department with the buckle misplaced, but if he puts it on as he got it, he is disgraced because he put it on like that - disgraced before the public and before a number of school-boys. If there is a confidential letter to his superior alleging that he is an illegitimate child, he is summarily dismissed. I am not drawing on my imagination, but stating actual facts, and could give names, if desired.

'In the Excise Department, rewards are given to officers for good work and detective ability. Compared with this, the rewards given in the Police Department are very insignificant. I do not know whether there is any justifiable reason for the special favour shown by Government to the Excise Department, but I do sincerely hope that this reason is not to be found in the fact that the Excise Department is a milch cow which yields a large revenue. If the Excise Department brings in a large revenue to Government, it also adds to the policeman's duties by adding to the vices and crimes of society.

'Excise-officers belong to the Preventive staff, yet they are rewarded for detective work. I should have thought that detective work really comes into requisition when

preventive measures have failed, and certainly it is no credit to the staff of officers who call themselves Preventive Officers to be rewarded for work which is of a detective kind, and belongs really to the Police. It has been said that unless rewards are offered in the Excise Department, as it is to nobody's interest to bring to light Excise offences, these offences will never see the light of day. But this is true of several offences in the Penal Code, which it is nobody's interest to bring to the notice of the authorities. I do not say that this system of rewarding officers should be done away with; as it has existed so long, no doubt the Government has sufficient reason for it. All that I have to say is that if it is found of any efficacy as a stimulus in the Excise Department, the same stimulus ought to be given to good, honest Sub-Inspectors for good work done.

'I submit, Sir, that Government also ought to come to the relief of the Sub-Inspector in another way, that is, by extending his training previous to his appointment, and during such extended period of training to place him in company with some detectives at work, so that he might have an idea as to how he should proceed in the discharge of his duties.

'At the discussion of the Financial Statement last year, I expressed the hope that the friendly and parental attitude of the Government towards District Boards, as manifested by the grant of 4 lakhs to the District Boards last year, would be emphasized more and more in future years. My hopes have been more than realized this year, and we have got an amount which is in excess of last year's grant. On behalf of the District Boards of Orissa, I beg to thank the Government for its allotment, Rs.30,000 out of last year's grant. I need hardly point out to the Hon'ble Mr. Kisch what the Hon'ble Mr. Baker said in reply to my appeal last year. The Hon'ble Member said:

"The Hon'ble Mr. Das has made an appeal to us that, in

making the distribution, the Government should bear in mind the question of feeder roads in Orissa. We are fully alive to the fact that the East Coast Railway will not be complete, unless feeder roads are provided, and the Hon'ble Member may be sure we will give to his division the full share which is its due".

'I hope the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Finances will bear in mind these words of his predecessor in office when distributing the 5 lakhs meant for District Boards, and 1½ lakhs provided for Feeder Roads.

'Sir, the introduction of the railway into Orissa is associated with your Honour's rule; may I be permitted to express the hope that it will be the privilege of my race to associate with that rule also the completion of a system of feeder roads, which will bring to the door of the villagers, in the most backward province, the benefits of what is the most potent civilizing agency of the glorious Victorian era?

'I gave notice of certain questions to the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Finances: they were actually in the nature of requests for information as to details; but as I have reason to believe that it is not practicable for Government to give those details, I now withdraw the questions, and the Hon'ble Member need not go into them.

'Last year, I made an ineffectual appeal on behalf of the Statutory Civilians. I believe in the justice of my cause, and I have full belief in the justice of Your Honour's Government, and therefore I renew this appeal, which I ask you to consider in the light of the facts which I am going to place before Your Honour. And I trust Your Honour's Government will see a way of abolishing the two-third pay rule - at least in regard to the more deserving members of that service – if it be deemed inexpedient to expunge it altogether. The members of this service have passed through changes of

policy, and have experienced the jealousy and envy of the sister services and met with disappointment which have no parallel in the history of any other service in Bengal. The Duke of Argyle, in introducing the Bill relating to the creation of this service, said that its object was to select for the Civil Service of India natives of this country, although they might have gone up for the competitive examination in England. 'I suppose, Sir, no words would make it clear that it was the intention of the Statute to open a new door for admission on ground hitherto reserved for the Covenanted Civil Service. To remove any doubt with reference to the meaning of the Statute, I shall only refer to the dispatch by Lord Cranbrook, dated 17th November 1879, in what Secretary of State vetoed the proposal of Lord Lytton's Government re-organize two separate services of a mutually exclusive character. In that dispatch the Secretary of State remarked:

> "It is, therefore, quite competent to Your Lordship's Government to appoint every year to the Civil Service of India any such number of natives as may be determined upon. and the number of Covenanted Civilians from this country will have to be proportionately decreased".

'These words make it clear that at that time it was intended to place the Covenanted Civil Servants and the Statutory Civilians on an equal footing.

'The inclusion in it higher service necessarily implies exclusion from a lower service, so that it could not be even plausibly con~ tended that the Statutory Civil Service was a part of the Uncovenanted Civil Service. But to remove the very possibility of a doubt on the subject I beg to refer to the following words in the Government of India's Resolution, dated 24th December 1879:

> "The correspondence with Her Majesty's Government thus shows that the main object of the rules was, not to

transfer to the superior ranks of the Civil Administration officers of a class whose services have already been secured by Government in the inferior ranks, but to attract to the service of Government young men of good family and social position possessed of fair abilities and education, to whom the offices open to them in the inferior ranks of the Uncovenanted Service have not proved a sufficient inducement to come forward for employment".

'These words show, *firstly*, that the Government was anxious to have a better class of men than were available for the Uncovenanted Civil Service, and *secondly*, that they offered higher inducements than were available to the Uncovenanted Civil Service. Agreeably to this Resolution, the Bengal Government proceeded to make appointments by two methods, namely by selection, and by competitive examinations, and those who got their appointments by competitive examination are, in my opinion, better deserving of consideration, and certainly have more just grounds of complaint than those who got in by selection. The Public Service Commission interpreted the status of the Statutory Civilian in a way which was not consistent with all that had been said and done by Government for several years, and certainly that interpretation was not consistent with the expectation of those who had entered the service. That Commission recognized the rights of individual members to specified posts only, ignored the idea of an organized service and recommended the absorption of the Statutory into the Uncovenented Provincial Service. Government accepted the view expressed by the Public Service Commission, without giving an opportunity to those whose interests had been affected to represent their view and their side of the case. Their grievances have evoked the united sympathy of the Press representing all classes of the Indian

population. *The Englishman, the Pioneer, the Madras Mail, the Advocate of India* in Bombay, and all the papers here considered the action taken by the Government as amounting to an unjust escheat of vested rights, involving an actual breach of faith. Some of the members of the Statutory Civil Service petitioned the Government to have copies of certain documents in order that they might make a representation, and they asked the Government to forward this representation, with the necessary documents, to the Crown Lawyers for their opinion on the point as to whether they were members of an organized service or mere holders of specified appointments, but no heed was given to their application.

'Two sets of rules were framed under the Statute – one was in 1875 and the other in 1879. The rules of 1875 speak of the appointment to an office, place of appointment under the Civil Service of Her Majesty in India. The words 'office' and 'place' do not occur in the Rules of 1879, which speak of employment in posts hitherto usually held by Covenanted Civil Servants, and this change was no doubt not without reason. The appointments made under both rules were announced in different languages in the official Gazettes. The appointment of Rameshwar Singh under the Rules of 1875 was to be Assistant Magistrate of Darbhanga, and the appointment of Kumar Upendro Krishna Deb under the Rules of 1879 was to be a member of the Bengal Civil Service. 'There is no doubt that the omission of the words 'office' and 'place' in the rules of 1879 was meant to supersede the idea of appointment to specified posts, which evidently was the aim of the rules of 1875, but it seems more likely than not that the attention of the Commission was not drawn to the change in language in the two rules, or to the manner in which the appointments had been made under the two rules. It is not my intention to go behind these rules, but accepting the Public Service Commission's theory I beg to ask, is there

any justification for this two-third pay rule?

'The appointment to specified posts ought to carry with it the emolument of the last incumbent. The Public Service Commission do not support this distinction in pay, and think the distinction is 'invidious and indefensible '. If the recommendations of the Public Service Commission ought to be accepted at all, they ought to be accepted in their entirety. Why accept them only so far as they relegate these Civilians into a lower service, and reject them so far as they go to show that the distinction in pay is 'invidious and indefensible'? This is neither justice to the Statutory Civilian nor courtesy to the Public Service Commission.

'In reply to my appeal last year, the Hon'ble Mr. Buckland said that there was no reason why native officers should receive the same pay as Europeans for doing the same work in India. I beg to submit that there is no difference of pay in the case of European and Native members of the Covenanted Civil Service, no difference of pay between European and Native District Superintendents of Police, and no difference of pay between European and Native Deputy Magistrates. The two-third rule does not exist anywhere, except in the Civil Service Regulations, and there too are the qualifying words "unless otherwise ordered". This shows that the Government has reserved to itself the power to make an exception in any case they like and to give full pay in cases of exceptional merit. May I be permitted to ask if there is not a single member of the Statutory Civil Service, who, by reason of meritorious services or otherwise, ought to benefit by this qualifying clause. The members of the Statutory Civil Service complain and feel that they are unjustly treated, and yet most of them are now employed as District and Sessions Judges. A District and Sessions Judge is not only the head of the Judicial Administration of a district, but he is also the exponent of British Justice to the people. Is it desirable that so high a functionary should live

in the painful consciousness of having been unjustly treated by the Government he serves?'

(1902)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Lt. Governor of Bengal,1902,* dated 4 April 1902, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator,* pp.31-42)

Ourselves

[This lecture was given at a meeting of the Utkal Young Men's Association in Cuttack in July 1904. It was published in the Oriya weekly *Utkal Dipika* on 30 July 1904.]

At the outset I should tell you that I am not a scholar nor a *Pandit* nor a man who has devoted the best portion of his life in the field of learning and literature. I don't pretend to be a master of English language. So you cannot expect to hear from me a learned discourse. If you don't find a nominative and a verb closed to one another like a bride and a bridegroom before the Marriage Registrar, I hope you will not pronounce a hasty judgment of divorce between my feelings and my language. I speak only what I feel and what my heart prompts. Now my dear young friends:

The subject of my remarks is 'Ourselves', 'Ourselves' includes, the ideas of 'myself' and 'yourself', this forms arithmetically 'Ourselves'.

As regards myself I should tell you that nothing affords me so much pleasure or pain before you as an ideal life. Unfortunately mine cannot be said to be an ideal life. I have had many pitfalls, many shoals, many sand-banks, and many dangers to go through. So I cannot be expected to lead you safely through the voyage of life.

This much I tell you that I can't be your pilot. I can stand on the most of the ship and can warn you not to take the course which led me to pitfalls and sand banks, but I

cannot direct the course of the ship. Now comes the other element 'yourselves'. Who are you? What are you? And what is your position in the society? If you have ever been on board of a steamer, you may have noticed that the safety of the vessel depends on one man – that is the commander. Similarly the fate of your country depends on you.

Try to imagine the responsibility that hangs to your position. Whether India can ever be in future what she had been before entirely depends upon you.

In India we find the superstitions of the oriental character on the one hand and the materialism of the western world on the other. Those are two dangers–Scylla and Charybdis–of which you are so much afraid.

I don't know whether any of you has stood by the death-bed of a good and noble man who lived for glorification of God. If you have ever stood by such a death-bed when life was fast ebbing away, when cold hand of Death was creeping over the body, you must have felt a kind of electric shock, a thrill, a new experience.

Often I have stood by such a death-bed and what I said is based on personal experience. If you have never seen such a thing, let me take you to such a region ten fold before your imagination, the panorama of Prahlad's persecution by his father Hiranya Kasyapa or Crusification of Jesus Chirst. Or if you wish to see such a picture go back to the days that will never return, the golden days of our forefathers, when chaste women died the death of *'Suttee'*.

My grandmother died such a glorious death and when in moments of weakness an evil thought has accursed to me and selfishness has taken possession of me, I have often heard the voice of my grandmother whispering in my ear, 'will you taint my blood?' Often our young men think that physical development is the only thing to be desired in the world. If any of you is under such a wrong impression I should like to take him to Japan. If you look at the Japanese

and Russian you would certainly think that the gigantic Russian is far superior to the dwarfish Japanese. But opposite is the truth. Picture to your imagination a *'Suttee'* and tell me whether you do not believe that there is a thing in man which cannot be measured in any way. That thing is the spiritual element in man. The real prosperity of a nation does not depend upon its physical and intellectual development but depends on something outside matter. It is not the sword that the arm of flesh wieldeth that gains victories, but it is something which can not be valued, measured or calculated.

I dare say most of you have seen Puri and have walked by the seaside. I dare say you have seen numerous shells which differ in colour which all belong to Oyster life. In that class of Oyster it is a shell that is of value. But there is another kind of Oyster which develops pearls.

If I am asked to compare human nature with anything I should compare it with Oyster. The soul is like the pearl. The proper development of a man will be the harmonious development of his physical, mental and spiritual nature. To find any nation in which the three elements are harmoniously blended is quite impossible.

There are many things in a boy's life which are beyond the control of his parents. So there are many things in a nation which are beyond the control of wisest statesmen. One of these things is the harmonious blending of the physical, intellectual and spiritual elements. In the development of all these, there is necessarily a development of one element at the cost of the others. The three do not go together. In India the spiritual element was the element most cultivated. Our ancestors attained the highest pitch of spiritual culture. Even in these days those of the west who have studied Eastern ideas confess that Indians knew something of the occult world which the modern European does not know. Our ancestors saw God in every leaf of the tree, in every grain of sand and in every drop of water. But the waves of

western education and western literature have swept away all these.

In these days we find over students sadly lacking that spiritual element which was the chief element in the life of their forefathers. I have felt that those who have got western education and have acquired western habits cannot appreciate the moral value of a *'Suttee'* or that moral greatness of a Prahlad. Are not the temples now like weeping willows standing on the graveyard of the ancient spiritual culture? Do you possess anything which may be called invincible power, a power that rises above material power and approaches divine power? Shall we again return to the life of our ancestors? The solution of the question depends upon your career. I must ask you that if you want to have the portion of joy which God has set apart for you, if you want to realise that a soul exists within, a soul that is capable of doing things which only divine power can do, you must seek the path trodden by your ancestors. You cannot get on this world without faith. I believe a man who has no confidence in himself cannot attain self-respect; a man who has no faith on others cannot have moral courage. I may tell you that all that I wish you to do is, in whatever you do, remember that you had glorious predecessors, that if you have heart within and God over-head your life will be one of which you will not be ashamed nor will your country have cause to be ashamed of you.

(1904)

(Source: Debendra Kumar Das, ed., *Madhusudan Dash : The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.207-210)

Duty of an Educated Indian

[The speech was delivered in a meeting, which discussed the 'illegal' detention and 'unfair' trial of Surendra Nath Banerjee, at Cuttack on 26 April 1906 and was published in the *Utkal Dipika* on 28 July 1906.]

Gentlemen!

Lord Bacon says, 'When any of the four pillars of Government are mainly shaken, or weakened (which are, Religion, Justice, Counsel and Treasure) men have need to pray for fair weather.

In the peculiar state of things in India, religion is not one of the pillars of the Government. The financial position of India does not supply a strong pillar either. So the two pillars which mainly support the Government of this country are Counsel and Justice. The recent events at Barisal – especially the trial of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee – have shaken the pillar of Justice. So this is an occasion for prayer and not for eloquent speeches or impassioned utterances. We, as educated men, owe a peculiar duty to our uneducated countrymen; though uneducated they form the strongest and the most valuable part of the nation. We also owe a duty to our rulers, who belong to a foreign nation. We have in the course of our education imbibed to a certain extent the ideas of the ruling nation.

These duties, I mean, our duties to our people and the duties to our rulers require us, on the one hand to guard against the intentions and motives of our rulers being

misunderstood by our people, and on the other to guard against any infringement of the just rights of the people by any person in authority.

We should always bear in mind that sincere loyalty to the British throne is our paramount duty. To us – Indians' – loyalty to throne is a religious duty. Whatever might be the points of superiority of the Englishman over us, we do not yield to him in our loyal devotion to the British throne; on the contrary the obligations we owe to that throne are of a higher character, for, while an Englishman has to maintain the dignity, prestige and the honour of a constitutional king, we Indians enjoy the privilege of maintaining the dignity and gracious majesty of our King-Emperor.

When our ancestors welcomed; through the priests of the Jaggannath temple, the British army from Madras and invited the commanding officer to take possession of the country, they had unbounded faith and confidence in British Justice. However unworthy we might be of our ancestors we have continued to cherish that faith and confidence in British Justice.

In this universe law governs and rules supreme. Nature rules through her laws. Every breaker of Nature's law is punished by Nature, but Nature never suspends or holds her law in abeyance. Imagine the law of gravitation is suspended for one moment. The result can be better imagined than better described. To break law is one thing; a willful disregard of law by one entrusted with the sacred duty of enforcing it amounts to a suspension of law. The trial of Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, so far as the procedure followed has been published in the Newspapers, point to a state of things which suggests an analogy to a suspension of Nature's laws, and the feelings which the trial has roused in the people may to a certain extent be likened to the grave apprehension with which men wait an unknown and unprecedented change in Nature's laws. As an educated

man, it should, under these circumstances, be our duty to cherish a hope that the British Constitution, British ideas of what is due to an accused, and halo of glory which the Justice of British Court has cast around the British throne will survive this unprecedented event as they have survived many revolutions in the history of the British nation.

(1906)

(Source: Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.231-233)

Letters to A Daughter

[These personal letters were written to his adopted daughter, Shoilabala Das, when she visited England in 1906.]

I

My darling Shoila,

I know what a bad correspondent I am and how I do my best to avoid correspondence by telegram, but I have not the same feeling in your case now. I feel I could write to you a great deal more, When I begin to write I find my mind is crowded with thoughts, but when I think of the distance between us 99 percent of these thoughts appear unfit for communication as they are sure to grow unpalatable by the time they reach you, as would be a parcel of *Jilipi* [a variety of sweet], in response to your craving for hot *Jilipis*. You must be prepared for only such news as would keep long and won't get spoiled.

From your wire it seems the India Office have selected Maria Grey's Training College. I am very glad to hear it. Your College reopened yesterday and I suppose you three were there. It is difficult to picture to myself the wonder, astonishment and the curiosity which your presence among a number of English girls must have created among them. I would not be surprised if one of them re-enacted the part of the boy who on hearing the first Indian Visitor to England (Raja Ram Mohan Roy) address a meeting exclaimed with a

wonder depicted face (such as a Punch artist alone could sketch) 'Hallo, he speaks'. I should not be surprised if some of your would-be fellow students feel a similar wonder. My dear child, remember your duty to your mother country. Do everything you can to impress all those you come in contact with, whether as friends, or as playmates, or as fellow students or as mere visitors that the Indian women possess the virtues of her sex in a degree which the English woman would do well to learn from her. Love, kindness, forbearance, charity are par excellence womanly virtues. Religion is her special sphere. In India she has up to this moment held the strongholds of superstition against the attacks of Buddhism, Mohammedanism, all-ism and no-ism. That shows her social and religious strength. Let your life shine there. In my old age I indulge in fond hopes which would appear absurd to others, but to you, my sweet child, they should be no secrets. May it be your share in life to elevate the Indian woman in the eyes of England? They have an idea that we treat our women as servants because they do not join us at dinners, do not take the prominent position which hostesses have in European Society. But this is a false picture which the disordered Camera of missionary reports produces. In the East the idea of honour is associated with humility and power belongs to the unostentatious. These principles are enclosed as it were in a nutshell in Christ washing the feet of his disciples. The European often defends woman's position in social economy by the remark that the mistress of a house takes the important position because her husband gives it to her. This is a most fallacious argument. I give here the refutation of the argument.

(1) Supposing the husband gives it, the wife would not take it if she understood the value of humility, if she understood that real power resides below the surface unnoticed. The root of a tree which feeds the tree lies below. The power of gravitation resides away from the surface of

the earth. The Almighty Power is beyond the horizon of human vision.

(2) The disciples of Christ wanted to wash Christ's feet, but he did not allow them. My own opinion is that England has not yet learnt to give woman the position, which the mother of a nation ought to have.

The Englishman does not give the same honour to his mother and sister and daughter that he gives to his wife. This would not be so if the position of woman were rightly understood. In India the mother stands much higher than the wife. I want you to think over these matters.

As regards dress etc., avoid anything which lends to point to vanity. It is necessary in a foreign country to establish you respectability by dressing according to your position in the beginning. Plain dress should be used on subsequent occasions. For once your respectability is established plainness brings more honour than show.

There have been *Suttee* in India, but treatment like that accorded to Joan of Arc was never in Indian woman's share. I have written to you a long letter and I hope you will not blame me for inflicting lectures on you.
With love and my blessings,

Your loving Father.

(1906)

II

Cuttack, 23 Sept 1906

Dearest Child,

I have been amused by your remarks about the *physical jurisdiction* of the High Court Judges. I don't know whether the expression I have used is sufficiently significant. I should perhaps say muscular jurisdiction. Their work is practically

an easy one, if not a pleasant one. It resembles the feat of the voracious eater, who has spread out before him a large table elaborately laden with dishes of all kinds, good, bad and indifferent which a dozen of cooks have worked hard to produce.

The position of a High Court Judge reminds me of the Ex-King of Oudh who had at dinner time daily brought before him hundreds of dishes served before him. These dishes were cooked by his 250 wives. It was his pleasant duty to select some out of these numerous dishes and he claimed and got more credit for this than his wives got for cooking them. The lawyers place before the Judge all the facts and law connected with a case and his duty is to select and swallow some and let alone the rest. But he claims great credit for this, and in this respect he is worse than the Ex-King of Oudh, for the latter fed and clothed his wives and therefore in some sense his arrogance was pardonable, whereas a Judge does not do any such thing to a lawyer. This makes his conduct the more unpardonable. Even in this easy work of selection he errs and swallows stuff which he cannot digest and the appellate Court has to administer reproof of a very bitter kind.

Yours ever affectionate
Father

(1906)

(Source: Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Dash: The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.246-249)

Welcoming Sir Edward Baker, the New Governor of Bengal

'Your Honour, you have received greetings of welcome from one Indian nobleman – one who is perhaps the oldest among the Non-Official Members of this Council, oldest in the ordinary sense, and oldest perhaps in my association with the proceedings of this Council. I consider it my duty to offer Your Honour our sincerest felicitations and respectful greetings of welcome as President of this Council and as Ruler of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. For some time past we have hoped to welcome you as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and we are thankful that God, in His infinite wisdom, has entrusted the reins of Government to your hands, which I consider to be a most important event in the history of the country. When a vessel, Sir, is overtaken by a storm, the man at the helm steers it with a firm and steady hand; and while he steers the vessel steadily along the route, leading her to her port of destination, he is not unmindful of the lives entrusted to his care. Sir, I believe that personality is an important factor in any scheme of administration, and it is especially so in India. Laws are necessary, Legislative Councils are necessary, and laws are sometimes necessary even as surgical instruments. Sir, inventors and manufacturers of surgical instruments readily deserve the gratitude of the world, but the value of a surgical instrument to a particular patient depends on the skill of the surgeon.

'Sir, we are thankful to you for Your Honour's intention to visit Orissa three weeks hence. Orissa has no attractions

of pleasant memories associated with Your Honour's past official career; and yet, notwithstanding that, that Your Honour should have decided to visit that part of the country under Your Honour's rule, within so short a time of having taken over the reins of Government, and amidst numerous engagements at this time, makes us hope that Your Honour's rule will be characterized by reformation, direct touch with the people, and entire sympathy for India.

'May God grant you health and strength, so that Your Honour may rejoice in extending to the people under Your Honour's rule the full benefits of the coming reform, and when, in the fullness of time, Your Honour lays down the reins of this Government, may history look upon you, Sir, as the illustrious vision who worked out in Bengal the glorious mission of England, the extension of the blessings of civilized life.'

(1909)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Lt. Governor of Bengal, 1909,* dated 30 January 1909, p.2, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, pp.42-43)

The Assassination of Sir William Curzon Wyllie

'Less than two years ago it was my privilege to meet the late lamented Sir Curzon Wyllie. For an Indian in England to know him was to forget that he was among strangers in a foreign country. One found in him a friend who was in quest of opportunities to be a guide to his feet and a light to his eyes in a foreign land. In life he testified to the Englishman's courtesy and kindness towards the stranger: in death he glorified the noble virtue of benevolence.

We look upon his death with feelings of intense grief, and feel it our sacred duty to express our condolence to Lady Wyllie in her irreparable loss and to the bereaved family of Dr. Lalcaca, who met with death in the noble efforts to save an innocent and precious life.

I cannot find words to express my feelings towards the loathsome perpetrator of the crime. To call him a murderer or an assassin is to do him an honour, for murder and assassination have sometimes been committed in vindication of violated rights or in the precipitancy of wounded feelings. Human nature in its lowest depths of degradation and debasement does not furnish the colours wherewith one can paint this man's character. He reminds one of the snakes in the fable which bit the hand which fed it with milk. The man whose mind, though educated, conceived such a crime must have a viper's head on human shoulders. It is the viper's head which converts healthy food into deadly poison.

The perpetrator of this detestable crime when produced

before the Magistrate claimed to be ranked among the patriots of India. His associate during the last few moments of his life will be the hangman, and that will show how his claim is received by the custodians of Justice and Law; but it is the duty of our leaders, specially those who have opportunities of influencing the rising generation, whether such influence is exercised from the political platform, the lecture-room, the editorial desk or in friendly intercourse, to pronounce in unequivocal and emphatic terms their estimate of the man and the crime.

I believe that a false conception of patriotism and a desire to secure the glorious memory of a patriot at a cheap price are responsible for the whole series of anarchist's crimes recently perpetrated. Neither the Indian Office nor the Government of India is responsible for these false conceptions – these mistaken ideas. We Indians are responsible for those dangerous conceptions which have converted some youthful minds into the anarchist's workshop. I am not sure that the public demonstrations in connection with some of these crimes did not put a cheap price on the glorious memory of a patriot.

The life of a young man without any idea of his responsibilities as a citizen of an Empire, of his duties and obligations as a member of society, who is yet engaged in study with a view to learn these, is a cheap price for the glorious memory of a patriot. A patriot's glory ought to be the share of a man who works for the good of his country, and if he dies in the struggle he meets with death at the hand of his country's enemies. The wreath of patriotism ought not to crown the head which plots cold-blooded murder. The hangman's noose is the fitting decoration of such a man. This he is sure to receive, and the public ought to cast his memory into a pit of ignominious oblivion.

The time has come when all subjects of the British Empire should sink their differences in colour, creed, caste

and political views, and denounce in terms emphatic and unequivocal these dastardly crimes and speak of their perpetrators in befitting terms of contempt and indignation. The father and the family of Madan Lal have given us their estimate of the foul deed, and it is to be hoped that will be accepted as the right standard whereby the public, and especially our young men should judge these misguided pseudo-patriots.'

(13 July 1909)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Ltd. Governor of Bengal*, 1909, dated 13 July 1909, p.150, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, pp.55-57)

Budget 1910-11

'Your Honour, I should like to associate myself with the terms of felicitations which I have found in some of the printed speeches regarding the work that has been clone by the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Finance of this province. Without depriving him of any share of the praise that is justly due to him, I think I may be permitted to associate the names of other Hon'ble Members, both official and non-official, who were in the Finance Committee and helped in framing the budget, While talking of the budget, I should, with Your Honour's permission, draw Your Honour's attention to some inconveniences which non-official Members specially felt on account of the shortness of time and absence of opportunities in taking their due part and share in the discussion of the budget. I can never forget nor can I give adequate expression to my feeling when Your Honour announced in the old Council Chamber the advent of this new reformed Council. Those words were that to rule the country for the people was a thing of the past, and the country should be ruled through the people. That inspired in us a hope of the dawn of a day which we all looked for. The budget is the most important work that this Council has to do. It is really an adjustment of the wants and the needs of the different provinces under Your Honour's Government, and of the diverse communities that live under Your Honour's rule. Since I heard those pregnant and memorable words from Your Honour's lips in the old Council Chamber, it has been my sincere and earnest desire

to co-operate as much as lies within the humble power of an insignificant Member like myself with the Government with a view to see to the fulfillment of the noble desire so forcibly expressed by Your Honour, and I have no doubt that the same feeling is experienced in a greater degree by the other Hon'ble Members, I mean the non-official Members of this Council, who on account of their better education, wider experience and perhaps better tact are in a position to render mare valuable help in the work of the administration. But, Sir, in order that the non-official Members' services may be of any practical help to Your Honour's Government, it is necessary that they should have time and opportunities to make suggestions of a practical nature. I got a letter from the Secretary on the 5th of March asking me to send in my speech on the budget, so that it would reach him at 10 a.m. on the 7th. I got that letter before I received the budget. The budget reached me on the morning of the 6th. According to the present communications between Cuttack and Calcutta it was simply impossible for me to send a speech or to make any suggestions. Of course I could have done so, if I had sent it within two hours of the receipt of the budget. The budget is the result of the deliberations of several official Members of this Council, who are the ablest officers under Your' Honour's Government belonging to a service which has been pronounced as the ablest service in the world. And the budget did not contain some of those explanatory remarks which were made on the day the Revised Financial Statement was placed before the Council. Of course it would be a very great compliment to a person to say that he was prepared to make suggestions or to supply omissions, which were the result of an oversight in a budget, such a compliment. Sir, if the explanatory remarks did not actually accompany the budget, there would be resolutions and suggestions which would be wanting in the nature of being practical or which would not be desirable when read in the

light of the explanatory remarks that followed. Some of those explanatory remarks were considered as taken as read. My humble submission before Your Honour is that while we non-official Members are willing to place at the service of the Government all our abilities and such time as we can spare, we pray that we should be given time and opportunities not only to make our suggestions practical, but also to save ourselves from undeserved criticism from the outside world. Impracticable suggestions and resolutions, Sir, are considered as coming from non-official Members who are determined to take an attitude of hostility towards Government. It is highly desirable that this impression should be avoided. My suggestion before Your Honour is that the budget may be introduced at a sitting of the Council with the explanatory remarks such as are necessary to explain the budget, and then the suggestions and resolutions may be taken up afterwards at a subsequent sitting, perhaps after an interval of three or four days or such time as would be available to us under the rules.

'Then the next matter to which I should refer, is the remarks which were made by the Hon'ble Mr. Gourlay with regard to the works done by the Agricultural Department. He gave us a very lucid account of the work that has been done by that department. He told us what has been done in the form of researches, experiments, demonstration farms, and he told us also that it was in contemplation to employ a teaching agency to induce the agricultural population to adopt the improved method of cultivation. But, Sir, here a question naturally suggests itself. Have we taken into account the conservative mood of the agriculturist? Is it not a fact that he is inclined to look with suspicion on all innovation? I know of a young man who is employed in some office under the Agricultural Department and who is full of zeal in pushing the claims and the interest of that department. I suppose it is one of his duties to induce the

ordinary cultivator to adopt the improved methods of the department, but I know also that he has not been able to influence his parents to adopt his new methods. The whole family lands are cultivated according to the old methods. In these circumstances I beg to suggest that it would be more advantageous if little experimental farms are established and attached to village schools, and vernacular leaflets describing the results of the Agricultural Department's experiments in simple vernacular are placed in the hands of the boys and they are allowed to make the experiments. The parents should be allowed to visit the places to see what the children are doing, and consequently that would be a better means of disseminating the result than we can possibly get employing teaching agencies. I would also suggest, Sir, that some sort of industrial teaching be introduced into these village schools. Of course, there arc visible signs of an industrial awakening in this country; it is most remarkable that though agriculture is the most ancient industry, and an established industry, which actually gives livelihood to 80 per cent of the population, in spite of this, I have not seen any proposal to start an association to develop the agricultural industry nor any joint stock company formed to help the cultivator. Of course this is not the place here to discuss why that is so, but the fact remains. The present system of education is calculated to degenerate the young villagers– the artisan's sons - who have the idea that manual labour is something which should be avoided. One would expect that the literate son of a literate artisan, after he had received some elementary education, would apply that education to the improvement of the father's craft; but instead of that, that son always says that it is degrading to engage himself in manual labour. This is the lamentable result of the present system of education, because the present system does not train the hand with the head, and therefore it is necessary to remove this false impression that the hand

should be trained with the head. Sir, tradition says that when Kalapahar went to Orissa, at the news of his march the hands of idols dropped off. It seems that as soon as education enters a village, the hands of the artisans drop off. The education- elementary education - has produced that effect, Sir, and with this industrial awakening there is a great demand for skilled labour, and we cannot have skilled labour unless it is fed from a literate labouring class which can only be supplied by these village schools, and skilled labour is as good as the clerk's work at the desk. As soon as the artisan's son receives some education, he despises manual labour and does not like to work with his hands. He thinks that it is not proper for him, after having received some education, to use his hands though his father employed his hand in earning his bread.

(1910)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Lt. Governor of Bengal, 1910,* dated 2 April 1910, p.321, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, pp. 71-74)

Letters to Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Deo

[Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Deo, the zamindar of Kanika visited England on the advice of Madhusudan in April 1910. These letters were written to him.]

I

Bombay, 22 April 1910

My dearest Rajendra,

You are in the Ocean, that immeasurable, vast and mighty collection of water which has manifested its powei in destroying wealthy cities, and building of wealthy cities on barren sandy shores. The contemplation of the mighty ocean ought to fill your mind with thoughts helpful to the noble object which takes you to England. The voyage might be an aid to you if you think of it and read the incidents, events and the surroundings in a serious mood. If you look at the rocky shores of Aden you will notice the incessant beating of the waves on them. The Sea wishes to subdue the part. Man has tried to construct walls and dams to resist the encroachment of the Sea. But the result of the battle is yet unknown. At any rate it has cost man more than it has cost the Sea. The additional strength in the shape of stone walls shows the defeat of man. The secret of successful and sure though slow progress of the Sea is due its steady and continuous effort. There is an old saying 'Water falling day by day wears the hardy rocks away'. Time has proved its

truth by experience. If you look at the water of the Sea you will notice a continuous succession of the waves one following the other. They vary in their height and consequently in their strength. Sometimes they are high, at other time they are low but there they are always. They never die,

Human feelings have been compared to waves. The comparison is a very apt one. The human heart is the sea on bosom of which rise the waves of human feelings and wishes. Man's wishes rouse feelings, the feelings agitate the heart. But very often these wishes and feelings find obstructions on their way. Their progress, that is the attainment of the object wished for, is arrested and obstructed by rocks. These rocks are to be found in every man's nature. They are the enemies, the obstruction to an individual's progress. Rocks in the physical world are formed by small tiny particles of dust brought together. They are often brought together by the current of water. They remain for some time and under the combined effect of different physical forces they turn into rocks. Please note that water brings them together and eventually they gather strength and obstruct the march of the Ocean—the king of waters. So it is with human nature. Man harbours various improper feelings. The combined effect of this feeling is the formation of a habit. This habit which is formed by improper feelings at last proves an obstruction to the cultivation of proper wishes and feelings. Feelings produce habit and habit in its turn obstructs feelings. To conquer the habit, the feelings of the right kind must be continually present before the mind. They must be like the continuous string of waves in the sea, incessantly striking against the rocks of the habit, till the habit melts away under the influence of feelings of right kind. Picture to your imagination, paint on the canvas of your imagination a rock standing with its form and determined to stand as if frowning on the sea below and its

waves beating constantly to remove it, so that the sea might add to its conquests- might add to its possessions. Then imagine all of a sudden the rock giving way before a mighty wave. What would the waves do? They would leap over the remnant crags of the rock like a warrior flourishing his sword after a victory in the battle field. This picture will help you to form an Idea to have a fair taste of the indescribable pleasure you will experience and enjoy when your noble feelings and wishes, which are springing up now, conquer the feelings, wishes, ambition and habit, which have made your past life, which it should not have been considering the opportunities and means God placed at the disposal of your guardians for your education.

Think of the Sea

As far as your eyes can travel lies outstretched before you and behind you and around you the mighty endless area the blue waters below, sometimes in unison and sometimes in contrast with the canopy of heaven above. What are the constituents of the sea? Rivers, streams, rivulets and rain water collect and make the mighty sea. Drops of water fall from the clouds. Rain water has no colour. It falls on the ground. Millions of drops fall on the land. Many form a streamlet. They begin to move, according to the law of their nature towards the sea. Though originally they had no colour — I mean the drops of water when they descended from heaven —they take their colour from the land over which the streamlet flows. Rivers and streams have their distinctive colour. These colours they take from the nature of the soil over which they flow. I should have said from the colour of soil over which they flow. But when they meet the sea, or more correctly speaking, when they merge in the sea they lose their colour and assume one colour— the blue of the sea. So long as rivers and streams retain their colour they can be conquered and have been conquered by man. Very

often they die a natural death. Rivers and streams dry up when skies dry up—when there is no rain. Man builds bridges over rivers, tunnels under them. But when these streams and rivers cast away their colour and assume one colour they form the mighty unconquerable sea. We imagine Dreadnoughts and Mantua's are man's conquests over mighty ocean. This is a mistake. These vessels are what a paper kite is to the air. They are playthings and toys which exist by sufferance but can be destroyed in one angry moment.

The human soul comes from God — from Heaven. It comes as an image of God. It has no nationalism or nationality just as rain water has no colour. But when this heavenly soul is born in this world, it grows amidst the customs, manners, ideas and the standard of civilization prevailing at the time in the country or village where the individual soul is born. Like the rain drops human beings take their colour from the country where they live. But till a man is able to think of himself denuded of all that is due to the physical and intellectual and moral influence which work for his development, he cannot contemplate on humanity. Humanity is the sea where the human souls meet without their colour. Humanity cannot be conquered.

Me thinks you ask me what is the duty of man when he is one of a nation or race? Has he no duty towards the country where he lives? Is he to contemplate on humanity denuded of all nationality? What would patriotism then mean? The rivers teach what we should do. The streams run through the country. They take their colour from the soil over which they diffuse fertility and prosperity. But streams run towards the ocean. They have double duty – duty at the time and the duty of their nature – the ultimate duty, if I may so call the latter. If the streams don't run towards the ocean they stagnate and stagnant water is the hot-bed of germs of various diseases— malaria being the most common in India.

We must work for the well being of our race and nation, but we must so work that the race might join in the march of humanity in which we as an individual must join whether we wish it or not, for that is the law of our nature, the will of our Creator and the design of human constitution.

The P & O steamers are 'museums of nationalism and nationality'. Read the characters below the surface and see whether the individual soul is moving towards the ultimate and the development of humanity.

I have talked to you long and very likely tired and bored you. So I must take leave of you for the present.

May God be with you, guide you, counsel you and protect you from all evils and perils of the sea, is the sincere prayer of.

Your ever aftly,
Dada

(1910)

II

Delivered at Port Said

Bombay, 23 April 1910

My dearest Rajendra,

Where do we meet again? Have you past the sandy tracts on the sides of the Canal? Or are still within your horizon? How barren these sands are? It was on this part that the Israelites (Jews) crossed when they left Egypt, the country of their slavery. They were slaves in Egypt. They crossed this part and they entered the land of freedom. It is strange that even now this is the boundary line between that part of the earth which is inhabited by subject races and the part where races and nations govern themselves. Before you is the Mediterranean Sea, behind you is the sandy

desert. The Mediterranean is in the middle of the earth. Hence its name. You are yet below the middle of ordinary span of human life. The middle point has yet to be reached. Behind you is a desert. Every man's past life is a desert.

There is no man who does not contemplate his past life without a sense of regret. So we all have sandy deserts behind us but in many cases the barren deserts cover the whole span of life. You have seen your past in its true character early. You feel that you have missed your opportunities. You have awakened to a sense of your loss before you reached middle point of life. In you the Mediterranean has appeared early. Take your lessons from the Sea. Look forward to the Sea to teach your incessant activity, to teach you all that I wrote to you about in my last letter. Look behind and note why there is a desert behind you. Note the causes that turned an area, which should have been full of green, into a barren desert. You were born with all that contribute to make a life useful to the world, helpful to others and a source of happiness to one's self. But your occasional remarks have leaded me to think that you are not satisfied with the results of your past life. I don't know if I have read your feeling rightly, but even if I have misread them, I hope I shall not be blamed for thinking that you have had your share of common experience of mankind which is seldom without feeling of regret as regards to the past.

The only remedy for what has been lost in the past is to use most carefully the present. It is curious fact, but nevertheless it is true, that very often the horse which is last at the start is first at the winning post. Incidents of idle and truant boyhood succeeded by glorious life are not wanting in the history of our own time. Keshab Chandra Sen was a failure at Schools.

Never lose sight of the objects of your pursuits. Follow the example of the hound when he is in pursuit of a game.

Good-bye for the present.
Wish you health and enjoyment on board.

Yours ever affectionaly
Dada

(1910)

(Source : Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.257-281)

Presidential Address at the Beharee Students' Conference

I. The Royal Visit

Gentlemen & My Dear Young Friends,

The most important event in the history of British India is the advent of His Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor to this country. The Indian mind clothes Sovereignty with Divine attributes. The millions of India cannot understand a Constitutional Government. From the time India passed from the hands of the East India Company to the Crown, the people had longed to see their King-Emperor. At last God granted their prayer. As the sea rises in millions of waves to greet the rising moon, so rose the millions of hearts of a nation to greet their beloved King. His Majesty came at a time when there were patches of cloud in the political horizon which, to some, were the forebodings of a coming storm. But as the sun disperses all cloud and presents a clear blue sky, His Majesty's advent dispersed these clouds and the country had peace. This was a glorious achievement worthy of the worthy son and successor of Edward VII, who had earned the sobriquet of 'the peace maker' in Europe.

II. Behar and Orissa

The New Province of Behar and Orissa is a creation of the Royal command. It was created for the well-being of the millions of His Majesty's subjects inhabiting the Province. I am thankful to you for having given me this opportunity to associate myself in the deliberations of this conference.

The presence of an old man from Orissa at a Conference of the rising generations of Behar, is an unmistakable proof of a determination on the part of the people of Behar and Orissa, young and old, to do their level best to secure advancement of the Province and thus fulfill His Majesty's behests. Let us work together with coverage of conviction and earnestness of purpose, so that, if the end is not attained, the blame might not be laid at the door of His Majesty's subjects. Orissa is the holy land of India. Behar, where the founder of Buddhism was born, is the holy land of the countries of Eastern Asia. Buddha preached the extinction of the caste system. The hydra headed monster, caste, has not entered Puri, Juggernath guards the holy temple against the invasion of this monster. (*Cheers*) That two races, Oriyas and Beharees, who have directed their energies to remove the disintegrating forces, which have proved the most obstinate impediments to the consolidation of the millions of India into a nation- that these races should have been now brought together in one province is suggestive of a Divine dispensation announced by God's vice-regent on earth - our King-Emperor. (*Loud Applause*). The energies of two races have been united. They resemble two streams, each taking its rise from a holy land. May this Conference be the confluence of two sacred streams, like the Ganges and the Jamuna, and may this united stream flow through the length and breadth of this Province, diffusing beneficence to millions and sweep away by its united current all impediments to its beneficent course. (*Applause*).

III. East and West

You have no doubt heard the saying, '*East is East, West is West and never the Twain shall meet.*' I am not sure that public opinion on the subject has gained in clearness of ideas by the frequent repetition of these words. The East and West have met. The East had a type of civilization of its own; the

West had a very different type of civilization. The two are essentially different because the environments of life and the incentives to man's advancement in the East and West were altogether different, if not of an opposite character. The rising sun inviting slumbering life into cheerful activity, the smiling face of Nature reflecting her refreshing verdure on the blue sky, the soft and luxuriant fields of Ceres and flora – in short, Nature clad in the beautiful attire of a loving mother, received man in her tender embrace, and man, overpowered by feelings of gratitude, went down on his knees and began to pray in the words of Milton— 'These are my glories, Almighty Father, Thyself how glorious then!' (*Cheers*).

Thus it will be seen that the environments of life in the East proved an incentive to the development of man's spiritual nature. The same nature assumed a different attitude towards man in the West. Mists and fogs enshrouded the face of that orient luminary— the Sun. Nature, stripped of her foliage, stood before man like a bereaved widow in mourning. The sea threatened to bury him among its angry waves; the cold-biting wind threatened to chill his blood. Nature frowned upon man in the West. Man saw his only remedy lay in fighting against nature, and accordingly he prepared himself for the great battle of life. In the East man worshiped the Nature. In the West man fought against Nature. The result was that in the East man attended to his spiritual culture: in the West he attended to the culture of his physical nature. The development of the physical nature of man is characteristic of occidental civilization; the development of man's spiritual nature is characteristic of Indian and Eastern civilization.

England and India have met. Western and Eastern civilization have been brought face to face by a divine dispensation. I have used the word Civilization in its most extensive sense. By it I mean the progressive state of culture in all branches

of human knowledge which have earned for Europe and America the admiration of the world.

IV. Engrafting of the West on the East

What is your position as the rising generations? In order that you may realise fully your duties and your responsibilities. I should ask you to imagine a day in your life when on rising from your bed and coming out of your room you find two Suns; one rising, as usual, in the East and the other making his unusual appearance in the Western sky. The Sun in the East you know; its daily rise and course through the sky has been associated in your mind with happiness and cheerfulness; you have learnt to worship the rising Sun. But to you, the Sun in the West is a strange phenomenon. Picture to yourself your feelings if you stood between two such monarchs of the day, and your embarrassment in the situation; and then you will be able, to some extent, to realize your duties and responsibilities as Indians, who are in pursuit of knowledge which Western literature and science offer. You were born in a country which has been under the influence of a civilization which fostered the development of the spiritual nature of man. Your literature was pre-eminently religious. Your education must now be on Western lines. You must adopt the Western type of civilization in which the physical side of human nature receives its due share of attention. India worshipped Nature; Europe conquered Nature. These are two types of civilization essentially opposite in their spirit. The one is ingrained in your mind. The environments of your daily life appeal to the oriental type of civilization. The other is foreign to you. You form your first acquaintance with Western civilization when you begin to study English literature. This you are required to engraft on your Indian constitution.

It will not be sufficient for you to be content with a definition of education generally. You have no doubt been

told frequently that education means a development of man's moral, intellectual and physical nature in right proportions. But, this definition does not take into account the most important element in the problem before you, and yet the part thus overlooked gives a complex character to the problem, and makes it difficult of solution for practical purposes of life.

The education of the young with an eye to the progressive advancement of the nation is a problem which every nation has to solve for itself. The needs of education are suggested by the growing demands of the nation. The education of the young and the advancement of the nation in the scale of civilization are regulated by the principle of evolution. *The young mind takes its ideals from its own nation.* The environments of daily life lend a helping hand to the struggling youth to attain that ideal. There is a healthy balance of homogeneous forces which originate and help the progress of the national education. There is no foreign force to disturb or to be taken into account in the calculation of the result. But the problem wears a very different aspect in India. There is no homogeneity between the ideal and the environments of life. The ideal is foreign, because a foreign civilization is our goal. The environments of everyday life, the nature of our traditions and the lessons of our past history, are in conflict with the ideals before our young men.

Out of heterogeneity you must work out homogeneity. This seems paradoxical, but Nature works out homogeneity out of heterogeneity. We must appeal to Nature for a solution of the problem. My humble suggestion to you under this head is one which I owe to the teachings of Nature in your part of the country. *Your province produces the best mangoes.* (*Cheers*). These fruits grow on what are known as grafts. You are quite familiar with the process of grafting. (*Laughter*). The process consists in inserting the small branch of a tree

bearing delicious fruits into the stem of a seedling. Nature works out a complete union of the two find in time the result of the union is a tree which produces the desired delicious fruits.

What is the function of a seeding in this process? The seedling is indigenous; the branch engrafted on it is foreign. The seedling being a native of the soil strikes deep root, and by drawing nourishment from its native soil feeds the foreign branch engrafted on it. In course of time the marks of union disappear, and the free has the appearance of indigenous growth. It should be your endeavour to follow the example of Nature in your study of Western literature and Western civilization. (*Cheers*). As the seedling draws its nourishment from its native soil, and contributes to the growth of the foreign plant engrafted on it, so should the vigour and inspiration drawn from your country's history, its traditions and the lives of its great men, regulate the growth of the foreign civilization engrafted on you by your education. Have the life of a tree as your ideal during the period of your student life. A tree receives light from the sun which is millions of miles away; it draws nourishment from it; the cold winds from the Himalayas and the hot breeze of the torrid zone blow on it; it draws nourishment from both alike. They do not change the nature of the tree; and why? Because its roots strike deep into the soil and thence draw the largest portion of the nourishment which sustains it. Let patriotism strike a deep root in your nature; let this root dive deep into the recesses of your nation's past history and draw the vigour of inspiration there from; and your contact with foreign civilization, foreign culture, will add to your strength and vitality without changing your nature. You will be an Indian with Western attainments, an oriental with occidental accomplishments, a seedling of Behar bearing English fruits. And India will rejoice; England will congratulate you. (*Loud applause*).

It should be our aim to engraft the material element of Western culture on the spiritual stock of India's national character.

V. Industrial Development

This leads us on to the subject of industrial development in India, which, with its allied subject, technical education, is the favourite cry of the day. As you enter on an examination of the question at the outset of your enquiry you are met with the stern fact, that England's connection with India has produced serious effects on the industrial prosperity of the latter country. This result seems paradoxical, considering that in England during the same period the cause of industry advanced in leaps and bounds. I shall not trouble you with statistical returns which will be out of place here. But I should ask you to look round the drawing room of the landed aristocracy of Behar—the Rajahs and the Maharajahs- and make a list of the contents of the room of things which are there for both adornment and use and if you enquire into the place of produce of these contents, you will have figures which will appeal more effectively both to your reason and imagination. Take the case of cotton goods. Let us examine our dress, how much of it is of Indian manufacture? Very little, if any. (*Shame*). What is the reason for this? It will not serve any useful purpose to have an exhaustive statement of the numerous causes which produced this result. It is better first of all to confine our enquiry to such impediments to our progress; the removal of which depends on ourselves, and no help from outside can avail us in the least.

In order to illustrate my meaning I shall refer to articles which every one of us is using at the present moment. They may be called our wearing apparel, for our boots and shoes are apparel. They are covering for a part of the body. These were manufactured in ancient India under rigid restrictions

of the caste rules. The weaver caste, called *Tanti* in our part of the country, presented society with covering for the body. The *Chamar*, or *Mochi*, supplied the foot-wear. The rigid rules of caste system confined the occupation to a particular section of the community. This made the division of labour impossibility. The importance of division of labour in the development of industry is not realized by our countrymen. From the time I read Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations I knew by role the two expressions 'time is money' and 'division of labour', but I did not realize the full significance of these expressions till my attempt to apply them to my factories had cost me about two lakhs of rupees in the shape of labour of the individual workman. This helps him to acquire facility and skill in the particular work assigned to him. In course of time his outturn of work is better finished, and done in less time.

From what I have said it will he seen that the modern caste system is an impediment to the application of division of labour to indigeneous industries in this country. Herein lies England's advantage over India. There can be no division of labour between the individuals engaged in a caste occupation. The poor *Chamar* or *Mochi* cannot confine himself to heel building. Division of labour requires organized institutions. This requires combination of the three great powers in the commercial world—hand, head and money. I am fully aware I have taken up much of your time over this subject, but I did it on purpose. There was a short time ago an outbreak of uncontrollable enthusiasm on the part of young men of some parts of India in the cause of indigenous industries. This, I believe, was due to ignorance on the part of our young friends and their leaders of the impediments to the development of industries on Western lines. I have just given you a slight glimpse of the difficulties we have to meet in competing with Europe. But I hope that will be sufficient to put you on your guard against being

carried away by the enthusiasm of ignorance and thoughtlessness. Do not be led away by mere impulses; do not mistake potential capabilities for actual power available for practical work. There is a great difference between the two. One is painted on your imagination by the fervour of patriotism; the other is a tangible fact. There is, according to Edison's calculation, enough energy in a pound of coal to carry it round the world, but it requires many pounds of coal to start a fly-wheel. This illustrates the difference between potential and serviceable energy. I have been in the field of *Swadeshi* industries for nearly 18 years. That was long before there was the least shadow of the *Swadeshi* movement. I know I have failed, but I have not given it up. A ship commander's advice is valuable when he points out to you the position and dimensions of the rock on which he wrecked his vessel. I wish you to put no higher value than that on my advice. Take it as the warning of a ship-wrecked sailor. While on this subject, I should entreat you to divest your mind of the indignity in labour. Our common ancestor, Adam, must have been a labourer. Tradition says that Biswakarma himself, disguised as a carpenter, made the image of Juggannath at Puri. Krishne, the great Hindu incarnation, worked as a cow-herd. I cannot understand why the hand which eats the bread cannot labour to earn it.

VI. Elevation of the Artisan Classes

Just at the present moment some of the most illustrious men of our country have taken up the cause of what are called the depressed classes. The cause is a noble one and deserves the support of all well-wishers of India. But it is a great pity that the artisan class have not yet evoked the sympathy of the educated community or of the Government. The depressed classes have occupied their present degraded position for very many centuries. Their position was no better under Hindu rule, probably it was worse than it is

now. The elevation of this class involves a revolution of both social and religious character. The work is of an uphill character. But the cause of the artisan class is more important in the economic interests of the country, and as the work will meet with very little opposition if done with tact by the heads of Government, and Indians of high social position and influence, it should engage our earliest and earnest attention. Unlike the depressed classes, the artisan classes such as carpenter, blacksmith, gold-smith, etc., are not untouchables. They are within the ring of the touchables of Hindu society. In the days of Hindu rule their social position was higher as they received marks of honour from the king, corresponding to the titles conferred by the Government in our own time.

With the advent of British rule and the craze for articles of European manufacture and finish, this class was neglected. We are responsible for their present low position. We owe it to our sense of justice to restore them to their legitimate position in society. The economic value of the step is not, I fear, rightly estimated by the educated community; or it may be that social pride blinds us to a right perception of the situation. The human body is a temple within which is enshrined an immortal soul created in the image of God and destined to attain a state of perfection approaching Divinity itself. Every limb every part of the body, has a value when properly used. How few of us, even those of us who are highly educated, realize the force of the truth and fact that our organs and certain parts of the body, when properly cultivated, constitute economic assets which add to the wealth of a nation. The French have cultivated their eye and tongue and these constitute no mean economic assets in the nation's wealth. France supplies colour and shape to the whole civilized world. The Frenchmen decides what colour will catch the eye, he decides the shape, trimmings, cut of the dress of both sexes, and all civilized nations pay him for

it. It is the value of the Frenchmen's cultivated eye. The Frenchman has cultivated his tongue and French cooks are employed in even the respectable hotels of India and a French cook, I believe, presides over the Viceroy's kitchen. These are the taxes which India pays to the Frenchman's cultivated tongue, or more properly speaking to the tongue and nose combined.

Similarly, the German has cultivated his ear and supplies music in a large measure to the world. The Italian has cultivated his throat and Europe pays very large sums for Italian vocal music. I could multiply instances which I noticed during my visit to famous centres of particular industries in Europe, but I should be tiring you with details. I have said enough to give you an idea of what I mean by the economic value of a human body. I am talking of living human bodies, for we know dead bodies too fetch a value in the dissecting room of Medical Colleges.

But leaving alone the value of the culture of special organs of sense, the hand of every man has a value. You increase the wealth of the nation when you increase the value of the hand of the people. Compare the value of the Indian hand with that of the Englishman. Let us take for our illustration a pair of shoes: both Indian and English hands have worked to produce it. The Indian skinned the animals, dried the skins, packed them in bundles and put them on board a ship. The Englishman tamed them into leather, gave the leather a beautiful finish and presented the Indian with a pair of shoes. The Indian hand got three annas, and some of the English hands got three rupees a day. The Englishman is therefore justified in saying that we deserve to have shoes '*jooti panay ka kabil*'. So long as we do not realize the maximum available value of the nation's hand, we can never grow in national wealth. The value of the artisan's hands will not be raised till his social position is raised; for unless this is done, the indignity which at present attaches to

manual labour will keep away the educated class from taking up the occupation of the artisans. The handiwork of the artisan finds a place in the drawing room of kings and emperors, but the artisan is not allowed access to these places.

The most painful satire on the life of the artisan is acted at the presentation of addresses. Very often the address is a permutation and combination of platitudes of a valedictory or complimentary character, and does not interest the recipient, but if the casket is a work of art it is examined with interest and admired by the assembly: but alas! the casket is handed over by one who does not know the artisan who made it and the artisan is not allowed admittance into the place where the function is held!

My appeal on behalf of the artisan class was received with sympathy by Government during the regime of Sir John Woodburn, who received an address from some artisans. The address was engrossed on a palm leaf in the vernacular language. He shook hands with the men and talked to them. In his reply to the address he said that Lord Curzon had expressed a wish to enhance the importance of his example by His Excellency's association with similar functions.

Young students are the future hope of India. *You are the rising Sun.* I appeal to you to remove the dark mists which enshroud the social atmosphere. (*Hear, hear*). If you wish to raise India to the rank of civilized countries, realize the importance of indigenous industries. (*Hear*). Remember you will have to compete with Europe. It is a war in which the odds are against you. And in this matter do not expect any help from Government; if it comes, receive it thankfully, but remember you have to compete with other countries of Europe and America, and the help that comes from the Indian Government will not make up for the odds against you. It is especially within your sphere of life to raise the social position of the artisan class. Try to realize from this

age the high dignity of labour. Labour hews the wood, shapes it, and puts it together to form the vessel which carries treasures and men to distant countries. Labour digs the ore, melts it and produces from it the precious metal which supplies the tiny needles and the roaring cannon. What the hand is to the individual, skilled labour is to a nation. If the direction in which the current of education is now running is not diverted, we shall, in the near future, have graduates with emaciated limbs, clothed in academical costumes, hammering on barren rocks to strike blood out of stone. (*Shame*). You will find some valuable opinion on this subject in an exceedingly interesting report by Lt. Col. Atkinson and Mr. Dawson issued the other day. The portion to which I draw your attention is the following:

> 'During recent years, there has been a continuous and insistent demand from all parts of India for an extension of technical education, and proposals for the establishment of institutions for teaching the most varied subjects have been made. The examples of England, America, Germany and Japan have been freely quoted as possessing numerous colleges and schools and as affording various facilities for technical education and scientific industrial training. It seems to be forgotten, more often than remembered, that these countries possess a wealth of manufactures, factories and workshops, which India does not possess, and in them, the growth of manufacturers, factories and workshops, preceded the establishment of technical schools and colleges. Nevertheless, a large portion of articulate Indian opinion seems to understand that if only a sufficient number of technical institutes are established, and a sufficient number of men are trained to take up appointments as managers, foremen etc., the establishment of manufacturing concerns must follow, and the industrial regeneration of India will be assured.

If it is admitted that in every other country technical education has followed the organization of industries, or grown up alongside with them, and may be said to be the necessary compliment to industrial efficiency, it is obvious that in a country where few industries are established, the wholesale education of Indians could only result in an excess of young men trained up for posts which do not exist, and for whom no suitable occupation can be found. (*Hear, hear*).

'The question whether technical education is of any assistance at all depends, firstly, on the general aptitude of the subject for this line of work. It is useless training a man in mechanical engineering who will not take off his coat and work, whose physique will not stand the strain, or whose social customs make manual work repugnant. Secondly, the question depends on the general business aptitude and energy of the race, whether capital and commercial confidence is forthcoming to start enterprises and perseverance and grit in the application of technical knowledge to ensure a successful outcome for these ventures. Captains of industry are not turned out mechanically in technical institutions, and every technically trained student must be prepared to start on the lowest rung of the ladder, show his superiority by hard work and technical knowledge, and having made himself indispensable and a commercial asset to his employer, he will then rise by the natural laws of supply and demand.'

VII. Female Education

The next point I wish to refer to is a very important one in any country, but its importance in this country is enhanced by the fact that owing to its neglect during some centuries in the past, we have before us the accumulated injurious results of generations. I refer to female education.

Most of the young men whom I see before me are already married or will be so at no distant date. You have been inoculated with the serum of Western civilization; your nature naturally looks forward to progress on Western lines; but your partner in life is or will be a person who is an exponent of an opposite type of civilization. I have already contrasted the Eastern with Western type of civilization. They represent forces which act in opposite directions. The advancement of a nation cannot be secured by opposite forces. The main object of life is to advance the interest of a nation. Individual's die by millions, but a nation lives. The individual's progressive ideas of one generation are added to the national stock of knowledge and become the heritage of succeeding generations. From this point of view, the education of children should be the most sacred object to those who have the future welfare of India near to their heart. *(Hear, hear).*

A man, who does not consider the education of future generations as important to the advancement of India, must have very indefinite ideas about a nation, and more indefinite ideas about advancement. The bringing up of children under parents whose life represents two opposite social forces must be a source of danger to society and an act of cruelty to the child. (*Hear, hear*).

I daresay some of you have seen an instructive satirical cartoon of two wives pulling a poor husband in opposite directions. (*Laughter*). The picture suggests painful feelings, but these are relieved by a sense of humour which it also suggests: but a picture of an innocent child being pulled in opposite directions by its parents is suggestive of unmixed painful feelings, and if the occasion of difference between its parents in one which affects the life of a sick child, the result of the difference might be disastrous to both the parents. The advancement of the nation can be accomplished by making our children the heirs of the knowledge possessed

by us. (*Cheers*). The child is and must be under the care of the mother till it grows up to be a boy. This is a most important period in a man's life. At this period of life the child accepts on implicit faith all that its mother teaches. Just at this period the mind is like a camera which receives automatically the picture of the object before it. There is no effort, no reasoning, no questioning; the knowledge gained during this period may be said to be inherited, not acquired. You know the difference between property inherited and property acquired. The man who inherits property is in a better position than the one who acquires property. The man who acquires property has to wait till a period of life when his acquirements and accomplishments are sufficient to fetch a value for this labour in the market. Thus you will see that the man who inherits property has a start before him of several years, besides having a capital which is of immense value in the struggle of life.

I should refer you back to the illustration of the mango's graft. You know that if the seedling which is on the ground is allowed to grow, the foreign graft incorporated into it dies. So it is in the case of a husband with progressive ideas, whose partner in life is conservative to the core. The influence of the fair sex is very great, much greater than that of the so-called sterner sex. Man boasts of his power, man is boisterous; woman is unobtrusive and conquers man by her tenderness. It is the old story of sun and wind trying to compel man to take of his clothes. The alliance in holy wedlock of an educated man with an illiterate partner in life not only affects the enjoyments of the couple's life, but it is a serious drawback to the advancement of national knowledge. (*Hear, hear*).

National knowledge is more important for the advancement of the nation than the knowledge of the individual. (*Hear, hear*). A nation cannot attain a civilized state unless its millions' know what are accepted as proved

facts in civilized countries. Common instances are to be found in matters concerning sanitation, and hygiene. The result of this is that our children do not inherit any part of our knowledge. They have to acquire it afresh. National knowledge increases when the knowledge acquired by one generation is inherited by the succeeding generations in childhood.

The establishment of Universities on national lines is very important. I yield to none in my admiration for those who are helping forward this noble movement by disinterested labour and liberal donations, (*Hear, hear*). But I may be allowed to remark that unless the intellectual atmosphere of the nursery room is improved the nation will ever undergo the punishment inflicted on the man whom the Grecian Gods had sentenced to roll a heavy ball up the sides of its point of destination. Our children must begin to learn in youth the lessons of the nursery of other civilized nations.

To deprive your partner in life— the person who will present to your country a child, who will represent you in the national assembly - to deprive your better-half of the pleasure which you derive from the company of the noblest and greatest men of the world— men whom you meet in the pages of history, literature and science—to deprive your partner in life these pleasures, is an act of torture which is more cruel that the Chinese system of punishment by starvation in solitary confinement. (*Shame, shame*). I call it more cruel because in the case of starvation the sufferings are terminated by death in a few days; with us it is lifelong starvation of an innocent soul.

While you are anxious that your son and heir should inherit your gold and silver, you disinherit him of your intellectual wealth. He starts in intellectual life as a poor orphan boy. (*Shame, shame*).

We Indians are very demonstrative in our references to

our ancestors. These references are made to set off as a back ground the present deplorable condition to our nation. I do not understand why no serious attempt is made to harmonize the fair ground with the background. In the back ground you see the figures of Lilabati, Durgabati, Sita, Draupadi, Ahalya, Tara and several other distinguished women,– who led the society of their time in the field of knowledge, politics, war and national morality. Modern etiquette would in same quarters take exception to the use of the word 'woman' in place of the word 'lady'. I prefer the word 'woman' because in my mind all that is noble, tender and sacred in the nature of the fair sex is associated with my mother. (*Hear, hear*). To me my mother was a woman. To me a lady is a picture decked in dazzling room just as paintings adorn the walls of a picture gallery. (*Laughter*).

I need not waste your time in an attempt to remind you of the important position woman occupied in ancient India. Take the two great epics of India. Remove Sita from Ramayana, the epic falls to pieces; remove Draupadi from Mahabharat and there is no epic. You cannot rise to the position of a civilized nation unless you educate your women. (*Hear, hear*).

VII. Self-Denial

Childhood is the selfish period of human life. The infant life is confined to selfish impulses. The infant is a bundle of selfish wishes and desires. It behaves as if it were the greatest despot over its surroundings. The infant wishes the whole world to rock like its cradle and minister to its happiness. It demands everything it likes without caring to know whether it has any right to it. I must have this man's watch, that man's ring, that child's toy, so wishes the child. Any refusal, any opposition, breeds displeasure, aye, anger. This is the period of exclusive selfishness. When the child grows up to be a young man he takes a partner in life. He begins to feel for

another. When he has children, the area of his altruistic feelings widens. He begins to feel that self-denial is a source of happiness. In the case of a majority of men, the benevolent influences of a spirit of self-denial do not travel beyond the family circle, in some it sheds its beneficent influences over a community, but in the case of a few noble souls its influence is co-extensive with humanity itself. Youth is the spring of life because at this period humanity sheds the selfishness of infancy and childhood, and puts on the charming attire of self-denial. At this period of life human nature manifests a desire to make others happy as the trees in spring shoot new leaves to cheer the heart of all creatures.

My dear young friends, this is the time when you should realize the importance of self-denial. There is happiness in making others happy, but the desire to make others happy and the taste to relish the fruits of acts of self-denial must be cultivated. The Creator of the world wishes the happiness of all creation. He created man after his image. It cannot be God's wish that man should be selfish. God wishes that man should be happy and make others happy. God's purpose can be served if man seeks happiness by making others happy. The man who seeks happiness in selfishness works in opposition to the will of God. He wages war against his Creator. Man cannot live for himself. He has been created to live for others and in his most strenuous efforts to live a selfish life he is practicing self-denial, though he is not conscious of it. The miser imagines he is selfish, but he is most unselfish, for he is hoarding up his money for some unknown person who will derive happiness from a benevolent use of his money. The miser practices self-denial unwittingly. Ho denies himself the personal comforts which gold might buy; he denies himself the happiness which acts of self-denial bring as their reward. Thus he is doubly self-denying. The pitiable condition of the miser reminds me of the bullock, which work in an oil mill. The poor beast with

eyes blind-folded goes round and round the mill, and is content to live on the oil-cake while the oil goes to man. Don't try to be selfish for you will fare no better than the bullock in the oil mill. Learn to live for your country and learn to feel happy in living for others. Trees toil the whole year in drawing nourishment from earth, air and sun, so that they may present delicious fruits to man; flowers exhaust their vitality by charging the air with fragrance. The candle burns itself to ashes to give light to man. The great luminary sun begins his daily journey from his chambers in the east to give life and light to millions of creatures. May your youth be the dawn of a life the sun, begin your life day after day with a determination to bestow happiness on others.

IX. Patriotism

Patriotism is a virtue which is admired all over the world. It means love for one's motherland. Some nations associate the feeling with the father and hence use the term fatherland. We, Indians, associate the feeling with the mother and prefer the term motherland. Personally I associate my love for my country with my mother. It was my mother who presented me as her offering to my country. When I was in the dark chambers of my mother's womb, I drank and drew my mother's blood. She starved herself to give me nourishment. This was an object-lesson on self-denial to me and with this lesson self-denial engrained in my nature. She presented me as a sacred offering to her and my country. This lesson on the importance of self-denial was reiterated every moment of my childhood, for she nourished with blood from her heart—blood whose colour and taste her sacred love had changed – blood changed into milk. When I grew stronger and looked for stronger nourishment than mother's milk, my country fed me and clothed me. Now that it has pleased God to take away my dear mother to the happy abodes

above. When my energies fail, when life is extinct, my motherland will receive my remains in her tender embrace.

As I take a survey of human life from beginning to end, I cannot avoid noticing that the basic element of patriotism is self-denial. It is a sacred feeling. It cannot co-exist with such feelings as spite and revenge against other countries or communities. The true patriot will love his country and his nation, but he will not bear ill-feelings towards other countries or nations. The patriot will die if necessary for his country, but he will not stain his hand with the blood of others. You cannot secure the advancement of your country by wishing the fall of other countries. You cannot add to the lease of your life by putting an end to other people's lives. You cannot add to the peace and happiness of your life by attempts to disturb the peace and happiness of others; on the contrary, the spite and envy which prompt ill-will to others will exercise a demoralizing influence on yourself, and thus make you unfit for advancement in your individual life. The viper carries poison in his head. This is its weapon of offence. But the possession of this weapon enhances the wrath of his enemies which compels the snake to seek safety in holes. Spite and race feeling are like poisons in the viper's head. The viper's head turns into poison the nourishment its body receives. The head of an educated man, who plots murders and organizes riotous assemblies, is like a viper's head, which converts useful knowledge into poison.

X. Politics

Politics is a very tempting field to young minds, but it is a most dangerous sphere of labour for inexperienced youth. Were I to give my reasons fully why I wish students to avoid politics of the day, I should be guilty of leading them to paths which I wish them to avoid. I shall give my reasons in a manner which my object and the situation justify. Politics deals with the political well-being of nations just as medical

science deals with the physical well-being of individuals. The politician seeks the healthy condition of a political body; the medical man seeks to secure the healthy condition of the physical frame. A healthy condition in both cases means the exercise of those powers which are likely to ensure a healthy growth of the whole body at a particular stage of the national or individual life. The responsibilities of the medical man are great, for on his advice depends the life of his patient. The responsibilities of the politician are still greater, for on his action depends the well-being of millions of his country-men. The medical man learns his profession by an examination of dead bodies. He practices the use of the scalpel on dead bodies before he undertakes the serious responsibility of using it on his patient. To those among you whose ambition in future life it is to lead your nation in political movements, my humblest and earnest advice is: – Work on dead bodies, nothing to do with the living. You will find the subjects for dissection in the pages of the world's history. Political movements have ended in digging graves or raising monuments to nations. Study these graves and monuments and make your notes so that when your country needs your services your life may illustrate that discretion is the better part of valour and irresponsible enthusiasm is the worst part of patriotism.

XI. Intellectual Indigestics

Philosophers have given various definitions of man as distinguished from animal. Some describe him a laughing animal; some call him a revengeful animal. Some think he is a cooking animal, some one described man as an unwilling donkey for he shows a reluctance to take his share of burden in the economy of creation. If I were given the privilege of defining our young men, I should define them as dyspeptic animals. I believe dyspepsia both of body and intellect is an epidemic in the educated community of our country. In the

case of body you know the presence of the disease from the gaseous erucations of undigested food in the stomach, in the case of the intellect you know it from the quotations and references to the opinion of others. These latter are erucations of undigested food in the mind.

Man needs food both for his body and his mind. Both are meant to add to his strength and usefulness in life. But to accomplish this purpose the food must be digested. Digestion is a very common word. Very few men make any serious attempt to understand what it really means, because all of us have daily experience of the process. You meet your friend at a dinner party; he does ample justice to dinner. You congratulate him on his healthy appetite and envy him, because ill-health compelled you to withstand the temptation of the savoury dishes before you. Your friend tells you he never knew what indigestion was. You meet your friend week after: he is on sick leave preparing for a journey to a health-resort. On enquiry your friend tells you his doctor has told him he has diabetes and he must go for a change of air, and yet a week before your friend believed there was nothing wrong with his digestion.

In the same way ask a young man just returned from Europe after having studied there a particular industry. You will receive assurances and promises of most profitable results from his employment. A fortnight after his employment you find he is suffering from tympanities of intellect and elephantiasis of memory. He has not digested the subject he studied.

Neglect of a habit of thinking for oneself and an abnormal desire to imitate are the tendency of the present age. I do not mean to say that this weakness is to be found among Indians only; it is equally prevalent among Europeans. You meet an Englishman in a railway carriage. He buys the day's issue of a newspaper and reads it. A few minutes after you talk to him on a subject on which the

newspaper expresses its views, and you find his views are identical with those of the newspaper. In these days of development of legal ideas of ownership in property, we believe, that having paid half an *anna* for the paper, I have a right, according to the legal conceptions of the 20th century, to call the Editors' opinion my opinion. When I see an educated man of my country investing four *annas* on a novel exposed for sale in a railway bookstall, because he wishes to kill time during the journey, I shudder for the future of my country. I feel the same pity for him as I would for a famine-stricken man with an emaciated frame. Poor starved soul! His previous study did not give him thoughts that could keep his mind engaged for a few hours.

The world has not yet produced two men who are exactly similar in every respect. Examine the features of the body, the physiognomy, the intellectual equipments, the disposition, the impulses of the heart and all that makes an individual's life and you will never find two men equal. Each man has been created by God for the execution of a particular mission, or, to use the language of the materialist, individual life at any particular moment of time is the accumulated result of the environments, of his past life. There are no two individuals whose environments are the same. Hence imitation is impossible and attempts at it are foolish. Unless you digest and assimilate the thought of other men to your conditions of life, you cannot add to the strength and vigour of your intellect. Your mind can be nourished and strengthened by the thoughts of other men, but it can never be a reduplication of other minds. Our Bengali friends live on fish diet; their brain power is attributed to this diet, but they have not been able to live in water like fish. The Chinaman has lived on pork for ages, but he has not developed a real pig's tail; he has only been able to imitate it in his braided tuft of hair. The Englishman's favourite dish is a mutton chop, but he does not show the mild nature of

the lamb. Certainly not in this country. The food that you eat must be converted into your flesh, blood and muscles before it adds to your power. Think of the change which the process of digestion brings about. Compare the bread and meat on your table with your body. Is there any resemblance, any likeness, and any similarity? It is changed beyond recognition. So it is with your intellectual food. 'Knowledge is power' is an old saying, but in order to be a power it must be digested and assimilated and assimilation means adaptation to your conditions of life. The book of nature is ever open before you. Try to read it for yourself. Compare your readings with those of other men; digest them and assimilate them to your condition of life and you will be armed with a powerful sword to fight out the battle of your individual life.

XII. Honour and Happiness

Life is a chase after honour and happiness. Youth is the time when this chase is started. In most of its incidents the chase resembles fox-hunting by dogs, or the journey of the man in the fable who wanted to catch the rainbow. The dog in pursuit of the fox is often misled by false scent; the man who wanted the rainbow was disappointed when the rainbow melted away.

It is not possible to define these words. They mean different things to different minds. So each one of you must have your definition of these two words. Once you lay down your definition of these two words, your career in life is chalked out. The goal of your race of life is fixed. It is not possible to change it in after life. Man retains physical elasticity to a much older age than he retains his moral elasticity. Moral stiffness overtakes him at a much earlier age. History furnishes you with instances of the pursuit of honour and happiness in various forms. The glutton finds happiness in filling up every inch of space inside him; the

Jogi finds happiness in reducing nourishment to a minimum. Aurungzeb found honour and happiness in holding his father's scepter in his patricidal hands: Buddha, your ancestor, found honour and happiness in preferring the company of suffering humanity to the luxuries and grandeur of a throne.

Some find honour and happiness in an enlargement of their names in honorific titles, but the public sometimes confer honour by removing all excrescences. Our great ancestor, Adam, evidently did not care for these additions. His descendants, now grown to the innumerable millions inhabiting this world, have not erected a statue or founded a hospital to commemorate his life, but his position as the father of the human race remains undisturbed. The murderers of Christ found happiness in torturing him to death. He found happiness in praying for their forgiveness for they knew not what they were doing. The world does not know the name of the murderers but most civilized nations now worship Christ. No one knows the names of the ancestors and successors of Buddha, but millions and millions worship him. Many a *Maharaja* ruled after the hero of the *Ramayan,* but the world knows and worships Rama, the exiled heir-apparent of Ajodhya.

Ram Mohan Roy was Rajah Ram Mohan Roy before he rose in popular esteem as the founder of Brahmoism. He is now known as simple Ram Mohan Roy. The greatest statesman in recent times enjoyed the unenviable distinction of the 'Grand Old Man'.

Only the other day death removed General Booth from his extensive philanthropic field of active life. You must have seen in the papers the honour the world paid him. He commenced his useful work among the depressed and despised classes of England and the world, including kings and emperors, accorded his remains the honours of a royal funeral.

Each of you has been sent to this world with a special mission from your Creator. Find out your post. *Take your stand there with heart within and God overhead* and do your duty without caring to know how the world views your conduct. When God first breathed life into you, you were in your mother's womb, having no connection with the world around. When you would be lying in your death-bed and your eyes will fail to see, your ears fail to hear, your tongue fail to speak, you will have no connection with your conscience, and if at that finish of the life's race your conscience says, you have done your duty, whatever the world might say of you, rest assured your Creator will address you in these words:–

'Well done my child. Thou hast been faithful unto death. I will give thee a crown of life.'

(1912)

(Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions

[Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea had moved this Resolution: 'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the grants made to Local Governments be increased by such allotments as the Government of India may think fit with a view to enable them to carry out the experiment of separation of judicial and executive functions in the administration of criminal justice in areas to be selected by them with the approval of the Government of India'. Madhusudan Das supported this resolution,]

'Sir, it is perhaps absolutely too late at the present stage of this question to bring out facts and figures or the personal experience of any person in support of the desirability of this proposition. It has been before the public for over a century and, whenever one likes to go, he hears the cry for the separation of the judicial and executive functions surging round him. The Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea in his speech has given several extracts from the opinions of Official Members of this Council and from gentleman of great judicial experience who had been in positions such as Judges of the High Court – who had been in positions to form valuable opinion as to whether the combination of these two functions has worked satisfactorily or unsatisfactorily. There has been, Sir, enough material before the Government to come to a decision. If those opinions are not sufficient to induce the Government to accept the desirability of the popular desire for having a

separation, it will be far better for Government to say "No we do not consider this sufficient", If this mass of evidence is not sufficient to enable Government to come to a definite conclusion, Government would be justified to take such measures, with the knowledge of the public, as they consider necessary to come to a definite conclusion on the subject. But from the answer that has been given by the Hon'ble Home Member, I am perfectly unable to understand the present position of Government. First of all his reply was that he wanted to meet the question from a technical point of view as simply a financial question; that there was no scheme, cut and dry, before him, that there was nothing to show how much money was to be allotted, consequently he was not in a position to accept the Resolution. An answer of that character would lead one to think that what Government was waiting for was a definite scheme; that the principle had been accepted by Government and it was only for want of definite figures and a definitely formulated scheme, that Government could not accept this resolution. But when the Hon'ble Home Member replied to the question put by the Hon'ble Mr. Vijiaragavachariar he said the question of principle and the question of the details to be carried out were so mixed up that it was impossible to give a reply. That means the principle has not been accepted yet. It may perhaps be due to a particular lack of intelligence in me, but I cannot understand, Sir, how it is difficult to dissociate the principle from the scheme. The only possible way in which the difficulty could arise would be from the fact that the scheme having been accepted there are not funds enough at the disposal of Government to carry out that scheme. Then the question assumes this form. If a principle has been accepted by Government, Government is bound to find funds for carrying out the scheme; or if the funds necessary for carrying out the scheme are so exorbitantly high that it is beyond the power of the Government of India

to carry out that scheme, then the public ought to be satisfied by a definite answer to that effect: "that here is the sum required for carrying out the scheme and it is beyond the power of the Government of India to carry it out". Then, if necessary, fresh taxation might be made. There has been such a cry for this throughout the country that I should not be surprised if the Government of India were in need of fresh taxation; the people would be willing to pay a new tax for carrying this out.

'But the position of the Government of India has not been definitely explained. Certainly, Sir, after these clear enunciations and announcements of the opinions of men and officials in very high and responsible positions, and this continuous cry of the people for this separation extending over such a long period, the public have at least a right to know the exact position of the Government with regard to this question. I have been very much disappointed, and I am sure my disappointment has been shared by most of the non-official members, that the reply from the Hon'ble Home Member, considering the gravity of this important question and the period for which it has been before the public, has not been as definite and as satisfactory as it ought to be.

'If the Government of India really are not prepared to accept the principle, the people should be informed that they are not so prepared, and allow the people to take such action as they may be best advised to take under the circumstances.'

(1913)

(*Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, 1913*, dated 7 March 1913, p.396, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, pp. 205-207)

Customs Duty on Imported Sugar

[Sri Ram Bahadur moved : 'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that an additional customs duty of Rs.5/- p.c. be levied on sugar imported into India from foreign countries.' Madhusudan Das opposed this resolution]

'Sir, situated as we are, I should not at any time be inclined to move a Resolution of this nature recommending in a definite form a customs duty on a particular article. It gives us all the same on the present occasion when these two Resolutions have been brought forward in the Council an opportunity which I do not like to lose of giving expression to a growing feeling among the educated people here that England is expected to make some sacrifice in the interests of India when there is a sufficient reason for it, when a strong case is made out for a concession in the nature of a departure from her free trade policy. I do not believe that this Resolution will be acceptable to Government, but I still hope that, when the Hon'ble Member replies to this that at some future time, a Resolution like this involving a modification of England's policy will be found acceptable to Government. For after all these matters must be controlled by the Government at home. Some of the speakers who have supported this Resolution have referred to the desire on the part of a certain portion of the population of India to prefer country-made sugar to the sugar imported from Java or other foreign countries. This is not a safe argument to go upon in

moving a Government to levy customs duties, for does not that argument imply that just because a certain section of the community wishes it another section should pay the tax? At the same time it is entirely under the control of the community, who do not wish to use foreign sugar, to drop the use of it and confine themselves to the use of sugar of country produce. That is a practical way of carrying out the wishes of the community. At the same time we know that almost all Indian sweetmeats are made of imported sugar. Sugar tastes all the same when it comes into confectionery, and there is nothing to tell us from what part of the country it comes. We should, as I said before, when the proper time comes, make a strong case and put it before the Council. The evidence of the case should show reasonable chances of developing some industries in an organized form in this country, and that the industries when developed would be of such a form and be in such proportions that they would safely compete with the foreign industry in that line; and then we should ask Government whether for the benefit of this infant industry, protection should not be given for a time. Permanent protection I do not believe in. India must be prepared to fight with the world. It is no use saying that we must be under the protection of this rule or that rule for ever. I do not think that of the Hon'ble Members who have spoken in support of this Resolution, anyone has given facts to show that even in the near future there is any chance of developing this - sugar manufacture as an indigenous industry in this country. The difficulties are many. We have heard today of the poor *ryot* cultivating his sugarcane. If industries are to be developed in the same line and in the same manner as in foreign countries, they must be organized; a large amount of capital will have to be put in; all that is necessary for the success which the industry has achieved in foreign countries will have to be secured. Now let us take a particular instance - a capitalist lays out his money he will

not have under his control every *ryot* who grows sugarcane. Unless he has land enough to cultivate sugarcane, he will not be prepared to risk his capital, leaving the *ryot* to dictate terms to him. As India is situated we have got *ryot's* right in land and the *ryot* can always be in a position, which you may call, of independence to dictate terms to the buyer of the produce of the soil. Therefore I said when I spoke a short time ago that we are not trying to develop indigenous industries. With us it is not a work of evolution, it is a work of revolution.

'Of course in Java the sugar industry was started at a time when land in large areas could be had. Capital flowed in and consequently the industry flourished. Where are those chances now in India? I think it would be very difficult within any prescribed area to purchase 2,000 acres of land in one plot. Then, Sir, sugar is a thing which is, I suppose, used very largely. May I mention to my Hon'ble colleagues the fact that Java not only sends to this country refined sugar, but a rejected bye-product of sugar is also imported into this country in the form of what is called *chitty gur*, and is used for making the *hooka* tobacco. That is an impure form of sugar which is used very largely. Now, has anybody been able to undertake to produce that in India?

'Then, I am sorry that I cannot support the Resolution, because when we come to look at the question from the point of view of practical politics, it will do us no good to have protection without knowing for how long that protection is wanted for developing the indigenous industry. Of course if sugar is subjected to a customs duty like the one proposed, we will not have sugarcoated pills from doctors, as they will have to be taxed. Not only that, but some time ago I saw that the Customs Office in England held that some leather imported from Australia was held up (for customs) as being weighted with sugar; and I read the other day Australia is

retaliating by refusing to receive English leather as being weighted with Barium Chloride.

'On these grounds I think, Sir, I cannot support the Resolution.'

(1913)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India,1913,* dated 17 March 1913, p.480, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator,* pp.217-220)

Amendment of the Press Act

[Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea moved: 'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that an amendment of the Press Act of 1910 be introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council so as to provide that when any order of forfeiture is made under the Act, the order must state or describe the offending words or articles or pictures or engravings or whatever it is upon which the Local Government bases its order, and that Section 22 of the Act be so modified as to definitely empower the High Court to set aside an order of forfeiture not made in conformity with the provisions of Sections 4, 6. 9, 11 and 12 of the Act. Madhusudan Das spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, the Resolution before the Council seeks an amendment of the Press Act of 1910. That Act was passed under peculiar circumstances. The readings of the political barometer at the time made it necessary. As to whether an amendment is necessary now or not is really the question before the Council. At the time when the Act was passed, the conditions which necessitated the passing of the Act were considered extraordinary, they were considered unusual. An unusual state of things demanded a peculiar piece of legislation suited to the time.

'The figures cited by the Mover of the Resolution show that Government have found it necessary almost every day to exercise the powers reserved to Government under the

Act with regard to newspapers only, for the Mover said that he had taken notice of 800 cases within a certain period, which on striking their average, gives more than one case per day. If that be the real state of things, what was considered an abnormal and unusual state of things at the time the Press Act was passed is now actually a normal state of things. On that ground, Sir, I think an amendment of the Act is necessary. If that be the right view, a thing which was considered usual at the time has developed into an evil which is to be permanent amongst us. So an amendment of the Act is necessary on that ground.

'The Hon'ble gentleman who rose immediately after the Mover hall sat down, said that he would rather seek an amendment in order to make the provisions of the Act more stringent. Sir, on both sides the necessity of an amendment has been passed. What really strikes one as a very difficult question - and yet it is a question in which the public are very much interested - is this, namely, whether the Act has been worded so as to give the people an idea as to what it is that is expected of them. The Act was interpreted by the learned Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in the case to which reference has been made by the Hon'ble Mover, and the Chief Justice pronounced it as full of ambiguities. I am very glad indeed that the learned Advocate-General, who represented the views of the Crown in that particular case, is present here. I mean the case of Mr. Mahomed Ali with regard to the publication of the pamphlet "Come over to Macedonia and help us" - that was the pamphlet which was being interpreted and discussed before the Chief Justice at the time. The learned Advocate-General then contended, and I have no doubt that his contention represents the views of Government. I have his words here - 'the High Court's power of intervention is the narrowest; its power to pronounce on the legality of the forfeiture by reason of failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act is barred.'

These are the words which I find in that judgment of the learned Chief Justice, that even in illegalities by reason of failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act the High Court's powers are barred.

'Sir, I have always understood that the mandatory conditions of an Act, especially when the conditions are conditions precedent to any action, or to any measure, or to any procedure, are a *sine qua non* to the validity and legality of what follows. But here we have a case where the mandatory can conditions have been differently interpreted.

'It is admitted that there are conditions of a mandatory character, and yet it is contended that the High Court's power to pronounce on the legality of the forfeiture, by reason of the failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act, is barred. If they are to be at all mandatory conditions, certainly they must be tested by those rules and canons of interpretation which have always been held to be applicable to mandatory conditions in all civilized countries. If we remove from the Act the mandatory conditions (let us suppose for a moment that the mandatory conditions are removed) how does the Act stand? The Government's power is defined in section 4 as– 'whenever any printing press is used for the purpose of printing or publishing any newspaper, book or other document, containing any words, signs or visible representations which are likely or may have a tendency directly or indirectly and so on, "notice is given to the keeper of such printing press stating or describing the words, signs or visible representations which in its opinion are of the nature described above". Words to a similar effect recur in sections 9, 10 and 11. These words (if the mandatory conditions be omitted) will not find any place in the Act. What is left in the Act is the power of the Executive Government to order forfeiture, and that power certainly is of an executive character. No doubt it is absolutely necessary that an Executive Government should possess powers which

should stand beyond the power of a judicial court to criticize. If I remember aright the learned Chief Justice in that very judgment says that the Executive Government may receive information from other sources than are open to the Law Courts, and the Executive Government may be influenced by considerations which do not weigh at all before a High Court. It is quite open to the Executive Government to exercise its executive powers – such powers as it deems necessary for the better administration of the country, for the peace of the country and the preservation of law and order in the country. But at the same time when the Executive Government comes to the Legislative Council and introduces a piece of legislation with a view to arming itself with a power through the instrumentality of the Legislature, certainly that Act which gives the Executive Government its pawn must be interpretation according to the known rules and canons of interpretation which have been the result of ages of judicial decisions. The executive power of the Government in this case has been derived from a piece of legislation. It was quite open to the Government to exercise its power, such as it thought the conditions of the country demanded, without coming to the Legislative Council; but when the Executive Government, which takes the initiative in every piece of legislation, comes to the Legislative Department, and takes its arms from the armoury of legislature then certainly the provisions of the Act which arms the Government with the power must be interpreted according to accepted rules of interpretation and construction. Here we have a piece of legislation where power is given to the High Court to test the legality of an order issued by the Executive Government, and yet we find the Advocate General contending before the High Court that the power of the High Court to pronounce upon the legality of the forfeiture, by reason of the failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act, is barred. I know there

have been conflicting decisions on this point in the different High Courts, as to whether the High Court has power or not to pronounce on the legality of the action of the Executive Government under this Act. If there has been any conflict of decision, I should say that is an additional reason for an amendment of the Act. As to what should be the line of amendment it is not for me to suggest. If the Government thinks that it would be justified to reserve to itself absolute power....'

(1914)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, 1914*, dated 9 January 1914, p.163, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, pp. 237-240)

Duty of An Indian Christian

[Presidential Address delivered at the All India Christian Conference, Allahabad, 1915.]

Man is born an infant. The infant is a lump of selfishness. The child is of nobody else but of itself. The child considers itself an absolute and despotic monarch of the whole world. My watch, your hat, his *garry* [vehicle] and horse are all his. He wants them and he must have them. If you do not meet with his demands he is offended and cries. Selfishness is the ruling principle in the child's nature. Gradually as the child grows and goes to school, he learns to respect the right of other children – his play mates. Experience teaches him that he cannot take away the toy of another child. This experience I may say is the dawn of altruism. When the child grows to be a young man or woman and marries, attains fatherhood or motherhood, the altruistic principle is developed in a higher degree. The man then learns to live for others. He learns to sacrifice his own comforts, to secure the comforts of his family and children. So when we examine human life, we find that with the decadence of selfishness there is a proportionate development of the altruistic principle in man till the altruistic principle attains to a higher standard to be found in family life. In most cases there the development ends. In some cases it attains a higher degree of development and he learns to live for the community to which he belongs. In a still smaller number of cases it attains a still higher stage and man begins to live for his nation and

for his country. In a few cases man appreciates living for the human race. We are undertaking today something which presupposes within us the desire to live for others. We have attained a higher standard of life, we have come here as representatives of people who have not attained that standard of life in which they can think of others. We are to undertake to work for them, to train them up and to think of them.

The nation is more selfish than a child. This is the teaching of history and our personal observation. In the case of a child there is a hope of correction. In the case of nation there is no hope. One who wishes to serve a nation will have to serve the most selfish and unreasonable constituency. We know every Englishman claims Milton and Shakespeare as his nation's poets. We Indians say Kalidas was our national poet. Bengalis heap glory on Michael Madhusudan. Did the nation do anything to make them comfortable? Where was the Bengali nation when Michael died in a hospital and had a pauper's burial? The nation does nothing for its man and yet claims him as if it were his parents. If you have a child and you have a great faith in his future judging from his intelligence and if you go round and tell your neighbors that you have got a very promising child and you ask them to bear the expenses of his education, I can assure you that you will not get any money but the character of a fool, but let your child grow a useful man, you will be ignored and the nation will say that child is theirs. So I say a nation is most unreasonable in its demand, most selfish and to anyone who is anxious and desirous of serving a nation I say 'Do not expect any credit for what you have done for the nation. Be prepared to do all you can but do not expect any credit. Be merged in the nation, be lost in the nation. You can have no independent individual life without the nation but your life must belong to the nation. I see the river Ganga there. It has been winding its course for hundreds of miles receiving

worship and homage from millions of Hindus. That is the individual homage. The river goes on winding its course and it falls into the ocean which is the picture of the nation. It loses its individuality when it joins the sea. There is no Ganga or Yamuna there. The homage paid to Ganga and Yamuna is no more to be paid there. If you want to increase the power of the nation, lose your individuality. Then you will see the power of the nation rise in waves. You may be lost but you have actually contributed to the power, to the durability and to the glory of your nation.

India represents the East and England the West. The two countries represent two different types of civilisation, the result of the environments of life in the two countries. In India man saw the rising sun, the glorious sky, beautiful streams rippling along the way the shining moon reflects on the streams and the sea. Man found nature beautiful and in his primitive stage he thought nature was his mother, a loving mother – a kind mother. Man argues 'If I have such a kind mother in nature, how kind and how loving must be the Creator of the Universe.' What was the result? The result was the oriental culture and development of the spiritual element in man. Man has two elements the spiritual and the physical. In England man saw what? The clouds hid the face of the sun, the chill wind threatened to kill him, the sea rolled and threatened to drown him. He looked up to nature and declared 'Thou art my worst enemy. I will fight with thee and conquer thee, for without conquering thee I can not live.' So there man set about fighting with nature whereas in India man worshipped nature. The result of this has been that while in India you find the culture of religion, philosophy and poetry; in England and Europe you find the culture and cultivation of sciences and what is science but the conquest of nature by man so that nature might contribute towards his comfort.

Two opposite types of civilisations have met at a

considerable degree in the Indian Christian Community. The Christians will have to determine what should be their attitude to their non-Christian brethren in India. The Indian Christians have within them an oriental nature that is the basis of their national character. That nature gives attention to the cultivation of culture of the spiritual nature whereas West gives prominence to the physical part of human nature. Shall we allow the Western Civilisation to swamp the type of civilisation which is natural with us or shall we simply graft the West on the East. In this country mango grafting is very common. There is a seedling and to the seedling is engrafted the branch of a foreign tree. There is an object in choosing a seedling. Because it is indigenous it soon grows healthy in this climate, it draws nourishment from its native soil and then feeds the foreign branch engrafted on it. Reverse the process and the result will be most unsatisfactory. So unless we keep our oriental nature and engraft on it the western type of civilisation (which we must adopt under the peculiar condition of our present life) the result to the country cannot be satisfactory. We have our nation's history, the glorious achievements of our ancestors and our traditions. These are the nourishments which will feed our life. Our oriental nature will draw nourishment from all these and feed itself as well as the foreign branch which is engrafted.

'Christian', the word denotes one who finds his ideal of life in Christ. I am talking purely like a layman which I am. What is the most prominent fact in Christ's life? The thing that impressed me most forcibly when I was a Hindu and induced me to embrace Christianity was the prayer 'Father forgive them, for they know not what they do' uttered by Jesus at the time of his crucification. It struck me that human nature could not rise higher than that. I could not have a better ideal..... What these words mean? These words are to me (as they ought to be to everybody else who

tries to understand them) the trumpet proclaiming to the world the complete subordination of the physical element in man to his spiritual nature, if I may use such an expression. The West has all along been taught to value the material parts of human nature. When East and West met nineteen hundred years ago and the teachings of Christ went to Europe, Europe resisted it. But for Christ Europe would have been a barbarous country. The East teaches 'Let one die for the happiness of others'. We are Indians and we must side with those who stand for morality, religion and righteousness and spiritual advancement.

The question for every man is 'where is your position?' Every one has a particular place in the nation. I do not believe that I was sent by God without having a particular place in a nation assigned to me. It is for every individual to find out his duty. Every brick in the building fills a place and you can tell how much weight it holds. Such is the case with every one of us. Find your place and take your stand there. It does not matter what the world thinks of you or says to you. When I was in my mother's womb and drew nourishment from my mother's blood I did not know anything of this world. I had no connection with the external world and when death comes and I close my eyes I shall be living but without any connection with the world.... When my relation with the world ceases I shall commune with my conscience and my God and if at that time God says – 'Thou hast done thy duty' –I do not care what the world thinks of me.

(1915)

(Source : Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, pp.211-215)

Amelioration of the Depressed Classes

[The resolution moved on 16 March 1916 said: 'That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that measures be devised with the help, if necessary of a small representative Committee of officials and non-officials for an amelioration in the moral, material and educational condition of what are known as the Depressed Classes, and that as a preliminary step, the Local Governments and Administrations be invited to formulate schemes with due regard to local conditions.' Madhusudan Das spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, the turn which the discussion on this Resolution has taken reminds me of the beginning and the heat of a football match. When two teams about to be engaged in a football match meet one another, each wishes that the other should come out successful; but when the kicking of the ball commences, in the heat of the sport, all that benevolence disappears, and the whole thing assumes an altogether different aspect. The object which moved the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy to put forward his Resolution has the full sympathy and support of all the Hindu Members. But in his attempt to kick the ball of responsibility to the other side, he raised a heat in the sport which has brought out undesirable discussion. But the discussion and the remarks which have been made have prominently brought into view these facts, that the leaders of the Hindu community are as anxious as anybody else to advance the interests of these

Depressed, I should rather say, Oppressed Classes. But then to quote the language of the Hon'ble speaker who preceded me (Mr. Malaviya), customs and traditions die hard. And the Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea in his speech pointed out that when it is a contest between a desire to improve and between old customs and traditions – customs based in most cases on religion – then we must look forward to the work of evolution; a revolution should be avoided. Now, then, what is the position of the Depressed Classes as we find at this moment of the discussion of this question in this Council? People are advancing to approach the Depressed Classes and give them the right hand of uplift. But that must be the work of evolution, and evolution is slow. It may be steady, but it is slow, very slow. Who can say how many millions of ages it took to evolve man out of his ancestor, the monkey, according to Darwin? Evolution is very slow, and traditions and customs die hard, but there stands the man of the Depressed Class. What is his position? He is away from Hindu society in the midst of a desert. Why is he there? Because at sometime or other he was cast away as the sweepings of society; and he does not receive the same treatment which even sweepings in thriving cities do, because the sweepings are looked after so that they may not ferment and breed germs of disease. Here these people live on the outskirts of a village; they are deprived of every opportunity of seeing the example of a good moral healthy life; they are deprived of what is a very powerful deterrent in the human nature, and that is the approval of respectable society. I believe, Sir, that the censure of society is a more powerful deterrent than the sentence of a judge.

'Sir, the man who confesses his guilt to the policeman of having committed theft will conceal it from his neighbour; the soldier who will walk into the mouth of the roaring cannon will shrink before the little finger of scorn of society. Society furnishes a very powerful motive for a man to be

worthy of its approbation and to earn its good opinion. What is the position of the Depressed Classes? What wonder if they turn to be criminal? It is all very good, Sir, to speak of the Criminal Tribes, but I am afraid very few of us realize the meaning of these two little words. A few men in a village commit an offence to which perhaps they are driven by hunger, and the residents of the village are all put down as belonging to the tribe of criminals. Before a child is born with the impress of God's innocence on his face, while he is actually drawing his mother's blood in his mother's womb, the brand of the criminal is put upon him. That is the meaning as I understand of criminal tribes, and that is what we have at the present day under the British Government, though the brightest jewel on the Crown of England was earned by abolishing slavery in the world. It is not my duty here to say what the Government has done or what the Government should have done. The question is, if those responsible for the administration of the country feel that they have done all that they could do or should have done to stretch the right hand of help to uplift these men from their pit of degradation; if they are satisfied, I have nothing to say. Reference has been made in the course of the speeches delivered to the missionaries' benevolent efforts in this direction. I may say that on account of the complexity of the Hindu social system the missionaries perhaps in some cases have added another Depressed Class. They acted from the best of motives, from the most benevolent of motives, in fact I should say from the highest of motives, but on account of their ignorance of the social conditions and their inability to understand the complex rules of society, they have added another Depressed Class, and I belong to the Depressed Class of the Indian Christian community. I was born a high caste Hindu, but owing to my conversion I belong to that additional Depressed Class. The doors of this Chamber are hermetically sealed against that Depressed Class. If any

Resolution is sent to this Council on the subject it is considered controversial, perhaps the very existence of that class is considered problematic; and that in a country where the Government maintains an ecclesiastical establishment and where the King who rules over us proudly bears the title of the Defender of the Faith. But let us turn to the situation where the Government can be of some help; many of these Depressed Classes are to be found in the jails; a man goes to jail and is taught an industry, he learns an industry and we often find that on the very day he regains his freedom he commits an offence again. To my mind that suggests a most interesting psychological problem. Why does he do this? Outside the jail he has those whom he loves and who are near and dear to him. As I said, after leaving jail he loses no time in losing his freedom again; why is that? I think, Sir, because the rules under which he works do not present to his mind any reward; he does not associate labour with the reward of labour; he considers the grub he gets is due to his imprisoned conditions. Can Government do nothing to improve this state of things? Cannot the jail rules be relaxed in such a way that the man would associate his right to earn an honest livelihood with his labour, and thus have an inducement to engage in the industry which he has learned in the jail? I suggest this because these jail birds are the people who are entirely under the control of Government. I do not like to go further because I know Government rules are cast-iron, but it is certainly in the power of Government to recast them in order to suit the present circumstances. I think we are agreed that this class really deserves our earnest attention, and I hope the Government, as well as those outside the walls of this Chamber, men of position, men of influence, will all combine (instead of kicking the football of responsibility among ourselves), that they will ... .'

'I will die before that minute expires! I hope all will

join together and stretch forth their hands of sympathy and help with a sincere desire to uplift those classes in such a way that the class will feel that the hands are held out to uplift them and not to strike them.'

(1916)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Governor General of India, 1916, dated* 16 March 1916, pp.379-81, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das* : *The Legislator*, pp.277-280)

Growth and Development of Industries in India

[Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola moved the Resolution on 21 March 1916: That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to be pleased to appoint a Committee of officials and non-officials to consider and report what measures should be adopted for the growth and development of industries in India. Madhusudan spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, this Resolution has, I believe, been moved at what. I consider a psychological moment. The War has opened the eyes both of England and of India, to the fact (more so perhaps the eyes of the Indian Government than of the Indians generally) that foreign goods find their way in immense quantities to India. By foreign goods I mean especially German and Austrian goods. Only yesterday, a sympathetic Viceroy removed the fetters of indentured labour so that our hands might be free; and I have no doubt that in this very Council where the shackles of indentured labour were struck, after a short time on the same anvil the Manu mission will be forged. I believe in my heart of hearts that the two countries, England and India, have been brought together by a benevolent dispensation of Providence. The two countries have not been brought together so that one of the countries only should be benefited by the contact to the prejudice of the interests of the other country. At a psychological moment like this, if we realize the importance, the far-reaching significance, of this

Resolution and imagine to ourselves that outside this Chamber there are millions and millions of people, of whom it has been said, and sympathetically said, and very often said, that they do not get a full meal twice a day, that their hands are paralysed and fettered, that they are the children and grand-children of those very men who were the architects of all the beautiful edifices that we see in India, when we realize these facts and also that in this Council Chamber we have non-official members of India representing the interests of millions, and also official members most of whom are Englishmen representing the traditions, the history, and the glorious past of England, then I feel, Sir, that this is a meeting the real significance and far-reaching consequences of which are very great. It is a pity that we do not like to see one another's weaknesses. I suppose, Sir, before the invention of mirrors, before mirrors were introduced into the world, every woman thought she was the prettiest woman in the world, and every man thought that he was the most handsome man in the world. Mirrors soon showed them their real features. Consequently, on occasions like these, psychological mirrors are very much needed. Crimination and recrimination will not bring about that co-operation between Government and the people to which Mr. Low has referred in his speech. Here is a fact that we have discovered, that there is a common enemy; we are all determined to crush him; both countries are shedding their life-blood through thousands of their sons. The question is, cannot anything be done by Government, with the people to co-operate with Government, to shut out goods that India had got from Germany before these days? I think I understood this Resolution to mean that questions of this nature should be referred to a committee, but I suppose we are drifting into matters which may perhaps embarrass Government and perhaps embarrass the committee, should the committee be empowered to deal with such questions.

The power of the mill-official member is confined to this, that he can recommend certain Resolutions to the Governor General in Council.

'Sir, is it practicable by a Resolution in a Council like this to recommend to the Governor General that India should have autonomy in its fiscal policy? Can a reference like this be made at the instance of India alone? Reference to a question like this might disprove that there was a point of contact where, in an emergency like this, there might be co-operation between the people and the Government which would bring about beneficial results. The remarks of the Hon'ble Rai Sita Nath Bahadur show that the Government had an exhibition in Calcutta to show the industrial products of Germany and Austria which found their way to India. Austria and Germany have been sucking the blood of India, like the American but which, while it sucks human blood, actually fans its victim with its wings. It has been discovered that they are blood suckers. The question is can Government, in the interests both of India and England, do something to supply these things – I say England, because as a matter of fact some of the things which Germany and Austria sent to India were not manufactured in England, and England had in may cases to depend on the manufactured products of Germany. Consequently, we have common interest and a common enemy to kill. so let there be no indulgence in crimination and recrimination with reference to the pact; let us no go back to the past and inquire whether anything has been done by Government in the past or not, whether the people have done their quota or not; that is not the question, but here is the situation and the question really before the Council is, what can be done to get the greatest benefit out of the present situation. As regards the suggestion as to what should be done by this Committee (my friend Mr. Banerjea knows even the names of the Committee, I am not such a prophet).'

'Of course, Sir, we submit our raw materials to other countries and let us hope that our raw material, that is the crude ideas that we put before the Council like raw materials, will be received by the committee and something good turned out by the machinery of their intellect which will be acceptable to the Government and the people.'

(1916)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Governor General of India*, 1916, dated 21 March 1916, pp.454-55, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.280-282)

Placing the Ancient and Indigenous Systems of Medicine on a Scientific Basis

[Khan Bahadur Mir Asad Ali Khan on 15 March 1916 moved the following resolution: That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Government of India in consultation with the Local Governments should investigate the possibility of placing the ancient and indigenous systems of Medicine on a scientific basis and increasing their usefulness. Mudhusudan Das spoke in support of this resolution.]

'Sir, during the discussion that has followed the Resolution and also when the Hon'ble Mover was putting his Resolution before this Council, I frequently heard the use of the expressions 'Western' and, 'Eastern' systems of medicine, and it was also said that they differed. There can be no two systems of medicine; medicine must have one scientific basis and one object in view. The object in view must be the cure of human diseases, and different systems followed in different countries may differ as regards the medicine they use, the drugs they use, or the instruments they use – such instruments differing in one country from those in another according to the advancement in other sciences made in each country. What must have been the origin of all medical science? If we go back to the primitive state of man, he must have gone about in a state of barbarism; disease must have overtaken him; he must have picked out some drug, used it and got cured. That was the first step of

medical science, and then, as society advanced, the information collected by a number of individuals was tabulated. It was all in its origin empirical in character. Afterwards, the information has been classified, and has assumed now the dignified name of science. It is but natural that in the East – in India – man must have resorted to the drugs which are naturally produced in India, and it is equally natural that in the West man must have used drugs obtainable in the West. The West advanced and with the aid of chemistry they prepared different tinctures, and, whereas the *kabiraj* now prescribes a heap of weeds, Burroughs & Wellcome have made compressed tabloids of these weeds. It is a question of mere dimensions. All that this Resolution asks is whether there is not sufficient material in India to form the basis of an investigation, and is it not likely that such investigation would bring to light the accumulated result of the experience of thousands of years? Science, Sir, is nothing but the classification of the result of human experience. What is science after all? Science is nothing but a survey of nature. Man looks round him and sees different objects, studies the nature of these objects, the virtues of the plants, and then he deduces his conclusions, and these conclusions form the basis of science, the result of scientific research. The Hon'ble Mr. Banerjea said 'if it is possible to build a science on it'. I do not understand why he should have gone so far as to doubt the possibility of it.

'I submit that here we have the accumulated result of the experience of ages, and that result has not died away. The very fact that, since the incoming of the British here the Western system of treatment has prevailed to a large extent and has received much patronage from the rich and the influential, but, notwithstanding all these disadvantages against it, the fact that vitality it draws from survived, shows that it has a vitality of its own, and that vitality it draws from the very nature of the soil and the environments of the

country. Consequently, it is not at all desirable that such a treasure, a treasure which in fact is the accumulated result of such long experience, should be allowed to die out. In my own time I have seen, Sir, there was a time about 45 years or half a century ago, when the European doctor condemned *dahi* (sour milk). Now, I suppose, that *dahi* is prescribed by every doctor. Men who are lovers of science pick up anything that really contributes to the health of mankind; it does not matter whether it is from the East or West. Disease is the same whether it is in the Eastern body or Western body. A healthy Western body is just the same as a healthy Eastern body. Consequently, Sir, I think that this is a thing which should not die, while we are spending lakhs and lakhs to preserve a monument like the Taj Mahal, or anything of that kind which was meant to commemorate the life of one person. We should not be justified in allowing to die a system which has preserved in the past the lives of millions and millions, and is now doing the same work on the same scale. Should we be justified in allowing this to die? And to die of what? Financial starvation – to die from lack of sympathy from Government.

'With these remarks, I heartily support the Resolution.'

(1916)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Council of Governor General of India,1916*, dated 15 March 1916, pp.344-45, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.282-284)

Heritage of Satee's Blood and its Inspiration

My great grand-mother in the direct line of ascent was a *Satee*. She offered her mental frame, a living sacrifice on the funeral pyre of her husband. This took place before my birth. But in my childhood my grand-mother, that is my father's mother used to describe the event in language, whose worth which prepared my impressionable young heart to receive her narration with the impression which the event which she had witnessed, had produced in her mind. The impression of an autograph signature shows not only the letters in the name, but also flourishes in the writing. These flourishes show the state of mind of the signatory. I have a vivid recollection of her graphic narration of the event. The *Satee*'s husband was ill for four days. He refused food. He felt he had the final call from his Creator. The wife (*Satee*) ministered to her partner-in-life in his sick bed. She took no food. He expired at dawn, as he expired she gave orders for erection of the funeral pyre. Her eyes were dry, she shed no tears. She went through the ceremonies becoming a bride before she is taken to the altar by her father to be given away. She had ordered my grand-mother to make two garlands of flowers. One of them at her bidding my grand-mother (her daughter-in-law) put round her neck. At this moment she spoke a few solemn words to my grand-mother installing her as the mistress of the house. The other garland she took in her hand. The household party went to the funeral pyre. Where they met the residents of neighboring villages assembled. All stood in solemn silence. There was no music,

no cheering, and no cry of any kind. The funeral pyre had been raised. It consisted mostly of sandal wood over which *ghee* (clarified butter) had been poured in profusion. On the pyre was laid the deceased. The Satee saluted, circled round the pyre three times, ascended it and put the garland on her husband's neck, sat at the foot of her husband with folded hands and ordered the pyre to be lighted. The fire had been supplied by an *aquibotri*. The fire was used to light the funeral pyre.

In the twinkling of an eye there was a huge flame of fire which went up to the heaven. Smoke charged with frank incense to announce of her journey to her departed husband's soul in heaven. The scene represents the wedding of souls of two persons who were husband and wife in the heart of the spectators.

My grand-mother took a delight in painting the scene to me and I must have heard it at least fifty times while yet a child. When she enacted a particular part of the event she used she used to press me to her bosom which I found all wet with tears. They were tears of joy. She was proud of her mother-in-law. The narration set my imagination of low. Every time I heard the narrative, I felt my imagination as it were in fire. The sentiments found their way to my impressionable heart and thence the arteries carried them through the whole system. A feeling grew upon me that the *Satee*'s blood was running in my arteries and veins.

Even at my advanced age I feel it my sacred duty not to paint the *Satee*'s blood by diverting from the path of duty from fear of personal injury, or loss of any kind.

Satee's blood guided me and made me proud. I felt pride in the surroundings of my village and felt it was a sacred place on the earth. The *Satee*'s blood made me what I am and always gave me courage in my troubles.

The administrative wisdom in enacting Regulation XVII of 1829 is problematical. A careful study of the text of the

regulation shows a presumption that in every case a *Satee* was a victim of cruel practice of society. I do not propose to present the readers of these lines a balance-sheet of the gain and loss to the spiritual side of a woman's faith in the indissoluble nature of the matrimonial relation. Can we not conceive of a noble woman who understood her relation with her husband in the words of Christ 'wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh, what therefore, God has joined together let no man asunder."

I have used the *aquibotri* in the foregoing narration of the *Satee*'s living sacrifice to unflinching faith in indissoluble character of the sacred wedlock.

Some Hindus in days gone by used to keep fire burning day and night. This fire was used in their cremation of the dead. In Rome the duty of keeping the fire burning day and night was entrusted to vestal virgin.

I had once a friendly discussion on the subject with the Hon'ble St. John Woodburn when he was the Lt. Governor of Bengal. I observed that the frames of the Regulation on which made the *Satee* practice a crime never saw a case of genuine *Satee*. The practice died before the camera came into use. There is probably no practice of such scene or I should have shown His Honours a scene. A few months after Sir John sent me a valuable Present book the front page contained a painting of a *Satee*.

(1918)

(Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

The Incomplete Autobiography

I

I was born in a family which at no distance period before my birth was in a state of opulence. The family had lost its former financial position, but had not lost the respect which the villagers pay to a landlord belonging to a caste inferior only to the Brahmins.

I was looked upon as a scion of an historical family whose religious endowments and charitable gifts were engraved in temples and *muths* (monasteries). Every Brahmin blessed me in words which I did not understand. The usual form of blessing is 'May you live to 108 years of age'. I had seen any number of old men and women, but I did not realize what old age means. In a healthy constitution age insidiously introduces its infirmities. But in a person who has a constant companion of an incurable disease for nearly forty years' time makes havoc on the physical constitution. The body becomes a drag on the soul's onward march. It is an obstruction to the fulfillment of the soul's ambition.

All the surrounding of my life in my village was calculated to develop pride. I do not know whether to call it pride or vanity.

Human life begins with an exaggerated notion of self-importance. Every child considers himself the master of all things he sees. If a visitor to the house has a good watch the child likes to claim possession of the watch. Any resistance

to this wish produces wrath and indignation such as would be natural in the owner of the watch if he had been robbed of it by a burglar. My early life was no exception to the general rule of human development. The environments of my life developed what is known as megalomania.

My initial education was entrusted to a man who could teach reading and writing my mother-tongue the Oriya language. He knew Arithmetic. The terms of service were food, clothing and rupees seven a month. The school room was part of the family residence. The room had a mud-floor and mud-walls. Floors made of brick of stones and plastered with lime are not fit for school room. The method of learning made a room built with brick and lime un-suitable. The mud floor and a piece of chalk make up the writing materials used in a village school. The alphabets are written on the floor by the teachers and the child is required to run the chalk over the letter pronouncing aloud the name of the letter. The mud walls serve the purpose of memoranda tablets where the teacher records, events and accounts. Mud walls are used for painting figures of men, animals and sceneries. This is done by the women. The design is sometimes attractive and considering that coloured earth made into paste with water is the paint used and the fingers take the place of painter's brush; it is no wonder some of these paintings have been considered by experts in the art as indications of an impromptu taste for the art.

The student is required to squat on the floor with his legs folded, his whole weight resting on his feet. He does not get a seat because he has to cover the space over which the alphabets are marked in chalk. It is a good exercise for the lower limbs. The seat provided for the teacher is a mat woven with the cocoanut leaves. He sits on the mat.

The next step was to learn to write on palm leaf. In Orissa the leaves of palm trees and an iron pen with a sharp point constituted the printing materials. The subsequent

introduction of paper, pen and ink has not completely displaced these. They are still in use in the village and are indispensable in keeping the records of the great Jagannath temple, in writing horoscopes, and certain ceremonials. Writing on palm leaf with a stylus is engraving and writing on paper with ink is painting. The stylus cuts into the palm leaf. The stylus has a very sharp point.

II

MY TRANSPOISTION FOR FOREIGN EDUCATION

An eminent astrologer visited my father. He examined my horoscope and he persuaded my father to send me to the English School. I was sent to Cuttack and was admitted into the Government Zilla School at Cuttack.

My admission into the English School brought me in contact with Bengali boys and Bengali teachers. The administration of East India Company had brought into Orissa a very large number of Bengalis. They were familiar with the system of British administration. Bengal had been under British administration for a pretty long time. They know the English language and were conversant with the rules and laws of British administration. They were helpful to the officers who were responsible for the administration of Orissa. The people of Orissa were profoundly ignorant of the rules and laws by which the administration was carried on. It was natural for the Bengalis to treat the Oriyas with contempt. Orissa is the holy land of India. The people were averse to adopting the mode of daily life which the Bengalis had adopted, there was difference in dress, in language, in food and in a thousand other respects.

I was the target. All my Bengali Class comrades everlastingly fired their volley of sarcasm and ridicule at

me. I was dressed in clothes which were the product of the village weaver. The English shirt had not made its way to Orissa. I was dressed in what is called *'Murjai'*.

The insult and scorn which was my share in the daily life at school produced in me a spirit of forgiveness coupled with a feeling of indifference as to what my Bengali comrades thought of me.

I had long hairs which were tied at the back. This my Bengali friends considered a sign of my being a girl not a boy, for in Bengal by the time short-cropped hair was the universal fashion. One day one of my Bengali friends cut it off with a pair of sharp scissors. I took it in a good spirit. Our Headmaster was a young Bengali whose qualification was that he had passed the Entrance Examination now called Matriculation. I asked my friends to let me have the lopt of hair. I wanted to keep it in order to prove my sex should I ever think or marrying Bengali girl. There vas a sting in the retort.

The incident narrated here brought the racial feeling to a climax. The selections from English Literature which was prescribed for the Entrance Examination were taught by the Headmaster who was a recent indent from Bengal. He interpreted a sentence in a certain way. I considered his interpretation incorrect and I had the courage to say so. This was considered an instance of independence and in-subordination which would not be tolerated in an Oriya boy. My name was removed from the register and I was expelled. This was a critical moment of my life. I realized the importance of my expulsion from school. It meant a full stop to further progress in English education. The importance of the Bengalis was due to their knowledge of the English language. Without knowledge of this language, I thought, my future life would be long journey through the arid desert. Some of my Oriya school mates advised me to plead for pardon to the Headmaster. I spent a most restless night but

the suggestion did not appeal to my conscience or sense of self respect. Early next morning I went to Mr. Healy's bungalow. He was the controlling authority of the school. I do not remember his initials. He held some appointment in the Collectorate Building. I did not then know the existence of the Indian Civil Service. But I learnt soon after this incident of my life that Mr. Healy has come out from England and in course of a few years the highest offices in the country's administration would be within his reach.

Early next morning I went this gentlemen's bungalow dressed as an Oriya with my *Murjai* on. I saw in the verandah a table covered with white linen cups and saucer. I did not then know what porcelain was, neither had I ever seen an European eating his meals. The peon or orderly in attendance explained to me the use of the table and the things on it.

I stood below the raised verandah to interview the Saheb when he came out.

At last the expected auspicious moment arrived. The Saheb came out. He talked in Oriya. He asked me what I wanted. I narrated what had happened and showed him the passage. He asked me now I understood the passage and how the Headmaster understood it. On hearing me he smiled and asked me whether I was an Oriya and to what caste I belonged. He directed me to the school at 11 a.m. on the following day. I went to the school at a little before the appointed time and waited at the entrance of school premises. Mr. Healy came in time. I bowed to him as he passed me in his *buggy*. I have no knowledge of what transpired though at the time I felt an intense curiosity to know the details of the Headmaster's interview with Mr. Healy. Soon after Mr. Healy left the place I was sent for by the Headmaster and as he saw me he said that he had pardoned me and had decided to take me back into the school.

After this incident there was a perceptible change in the conduct of my Bengali school males towards me. The impressions of the incident produced on my mind can be recalled in their original vigour.

During the years of Bengalee persecution at school I looked back with a sigh, a regret sometimes with tears on the days I spent in my village before I was transported to Cuttack for English Education. I thought of the days when I was loved, respected and blessed as the scion of an old family of Zemindars would not return. I was reconciled to a life where contempt and insult would be my share. My re-admission into the school dispelled the dark clouds which had gathered in the horizon. A long vista of future life appeared before me. I realized the truth of the Sanskrit couplet 'A King is honoured in his dominion, but knowledge is honoured everywhere.' I learnt to distinguish between 'inherited respect and self-acquired respect' and I decided to devote the rest of my life in the pursuit of respect earned by merit.

I passed the Entrance Examination in 1864 in my 16th year. There was no College at that time in Orissa. I had to go to Calcutta for further study. The prospect of meeting the Bengali in his own land was not attractive or reassuring. I desired to acquire facility in talking in Bengali. The Bengalis of Calcutta and the surrounding tract of the country speak Bengali which differs considerably from the language in East Bengal in the pronunciation of some letters of the alphabet and in the cadence of a sentence.

The British undertook the administration of Bengal about the middle of the 18th Century. The Government of the time directed its attention to organizing collection of revenue from the lands During the Mohammedan rule of India the chief source of revenue was assessment of the lands. For this purpose the Legislative Assembly of the time passed laws. They are called Regulations. Some of them are

in force even at the present day. They are entitled Regulations while the Legislative enactment which came into operation at a subsequent period are called Acts. These Regulations provide the details of a scheme meant to raise the land revenue in the Province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

- Here left unfinished.

(1918?)

(Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

Presidential Address: Utkal Union Conference

[Delivered in the special session of the UUC at Cuttack 21-22, Sept., 1918.]

Dear Brothers,

We have met here with an object, which is well defined; that object is a consideration of the Report on Constitutional Reform. The policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to India is contained in the announcement of 20th August 1917. We are all familiar with the terms of the announcement. That is the foundation of the future constitution of India. In his speech in the Imperial Council on the 4th instant, His Excellency the Viceroy described the nature and value of the announcement. His Excellency said:-

> I regard the announcement of August 20th as the terms of reference in accordance with which the Secretary of State and I had to do the duty laid upon us. I regard it now as the touch-stone that must be applied to our proposals.

In the same speech His Excellency said:-

> Am I far wrong when I suggest there are two schools of critics who write and speak as if the announcement of August 20th had never been made at all? Those who reject its basic pledge and those who reject the limitations whereby that pledge was conditioned.

Scope of criticism

Criticisms on the scheme contained in the Report should be within the bounds named by the Viceroy. It is not within the power of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to alter the terms of the announcement of 20th August or to assume powers in excess of that announcement. Those who maintain that the policy of His Majesty's Government announced on 20th August is not sufficiently liberal, that it falls short of the just and legitimate claims and aspirations of India, have to appeal to the British Cabinet and the Parliament for more liberal concessions. This is not the place for a discussion of the questions whether the concessions made, the policy announced and. the sympathy with Indian aspirations are adequate. Our criticism should be confined to the contents of the Report before the public. In his speech in Council His Excellency the Viceroy remarked:-

> Far be it from me to claim any infallibility for our proposals. ... If they fall short of the policy embodied in it (the announcement of August 20th) then those who complain of their inadequacy have good ground for asking for a further extension of the scheme.

In these words of His Excellency will be found the line public criticism should take.

In a speech in the House of Commons on August 6th the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montague made the following remark with reference to the proposals:-

> The House if it wished could tear up the proposals contained in the report in order to find better, but it could not, without perpetrating the grossest breach of faith in the history of the world, depart from the announcement of August 20th.

In these words we find the solemn character with which one of the authors of the report clothes the announcement.

The announcement is the Magna Charta granted by His Majesty to his Indian subjects. Authorities on England's constitutional history maintain that *'the great Charter although drawn up in the form of a royal grant, was really a treaty between the king and his subjects.'*

Political significance of the announcement of 20th August

The Magna Charta was a grant from an unwilling king. Infraction of its terms by the king was apprehended. To prevent any such infraction a committee of 25 nobles was appointed, any four of whom might claim redress for infraction of the terms, and upon refusal proceed to make war upon the King. The Magna Charta of the British Constitution was extorted from a King, who had, no sympathy with the aspirations of the people, no respect for their just and legitimate rights; but the Magna Charta of the Indian Constitution was the free gift of a constitutional monarch announced by his ministers in the national Parliament.

British Magna Charta: its historical settings

King John *'was an oriental despot, a tyrant of the worst sort.'* His personal character inspired distrust and aversion in his people. He lost Normandy; he wished to proceed to the continent to regain the lost territory. The nobility refused to follow John to France. This ended in an open quarrel with the barons. Soon after the barons in arms presented their demands to the king. The prestige and honour of the King was not the concern of the people; they were on the contrary interested in the loss of such prestige and honour. The above are the historical settings of the British Magna Charta. Let us compare it with the historical settings of India's Magna Charta.

Indian Magna Charta and its settings

The historical settings of political documents are aids to their interpretation; they throw a light which reveals the significance of the documents when there is any doubt on the subject. The historical setting of the announcement of August 20th is of an opposite character. India had always expressed an earnest desire for partnership in the Empire, for elevation from a dependency to an integral part of the British Empire. But India's millions were considered disloyal at heart; distrust and want of confidence was India's share in the Imperial Policy.

War and India's part in it

In this state of things Germany declared war against liberty and freedom. The object of the war was to crush small and weak nations under the heel of militarism and lay the foundation of despotic power throughout the world. Our noble King Emperor declared war against Germany. England espoused the cause of freedom and liberty. Just at this moment India volunteered her services. Resolutions to that effect were moved in the Imperial Council by non-official members. They voiced the sentiments of the nation.

England and India face to face

The Indian soldiers arrived in the western front in a critical moment of the war. Their services arrested the progress of the enemy's forces. Both England and Germany were undeceived. Germany expected to strengthen her position by India's disloyalty to the British throne. England entertained similar apprehensions. The mist of distrust, which stood between England and India, melted away and they saw one another face to face.

The Revolutionary spirit

The British administration in India had produced a revolutionary spirit among a small section of the people. They formed a microscopic minority, but a revolutionary spirit had shown itself. The world's history shows political changes are the result sometimes of evolution and sometimes of revolution. Napolean III said: *'In France we make revolutions but no reforms, in England they make reforms but not revolution.'* This is a correct enunciation of the British policy.

Lessons of War

I have detailed the circumstances in which the announcement of August 20th was made. The announcement was made at a time when the Indian and the Englishman were shedding their life-blood to preserve the liberty and freedom of the human race, to secure to the weakest nations the right to shape their destiny. The remarks made above find support in the following extract from the Reform Report:-

New spirit in India

> The war has come to be regarded and more and more clearly as a struggle between liberty and despotism, a struggle for the right of small nations and for the right of all people to rule their own destinies. Attention is repeatedly called to the fact that in Europe Britain is fighting on the side of liberty, and it is urged that Britain cannot deny to the people of India that for which she is herself fighting in Europe and in the fight for which she has been helped by India's blood and treasure.

Again the illustrious authors of report say:-

> The war has given to India a new sense of self-esteem, a feeling of profound pride that she has not fallen behind other portions of the British Empire, but has

> stood shoulder to shoulder with them in the hour of their sorest trial. We find a general belief that India has proved herself worthy of further trust and of a more liberal form of government.

I shall give yet another extract:-

> The speeches of English and American statesmen proclaim the necessity for conceding the right of self-determination to the nations.

Objects of the Announcement of August 20th

The above extracts show the considerations, which influenced His Majesty's Government to announce the new policy of August 20th, They are (1) The recognition of the right of all people to rule their own destiny, (2) the concession of the right of self-determination to nations, (3) the necessity to gratify the new sense of self-esteem and pride in the Indian national consciousness by the grant of *'a more liberal form of government.'* We have now the historical settings of the new policy and the objects it was meant to serve. These ought to be of great help in our attempts to interpret the text of this new policy.

What is Responsible Government

The announcement of August 20th contains a promise of responsible Government. The responsibility of the Executive to the Legislature is the cardinal principle of a responsible Government. That is the differential characteristic of responsible Government. The ultimate result of the contest, during the seventeenth, of the Executive to the Legislature. In the Reform Report responsibility centres in England and the responsibility is defined *'as consisting primarily in amenability to constituents and in the second in amenability to assembly'*. But the illustrious authors of the Report have eschewed this principle. It is not to be found in the initial

reforms. It is held out as the ultimate goal to be reached by successive stages of progress. His Excellency the Viceroy in his speech on 4th September quoted a passage from the report. The words are:

> We have carried the advance right up to the line beyond which our principles forbid us to go, but within that line we are prepared to consider criticisms and suggestions.

Transferred Subjects

Is the installation of Responsible Government with reference to the transferred subjects in excess of the announcement of 20th August? The number of transferred subjects may be reduced, if that is considered expedient, but the immediate introduction of responsible Government is necessary to fulfill the promise contained in the announcement of August 20th. A reasonable construction of the promise by His Majesty's Government should cover the grant of Responsible Government (however small be the area of administration allotted to it) in the initial step of reform. The further expansion of the area would depend on the result of the initial concession. It is note worthy that the Viceroy's words are *'beyond which our principles forbid us to go'* and not *'beyond which the terms of the announcement forbid us to go.'*

Construction of Promise

The announcement speaks of India as an *'integral part of the British empire.'* When is India to be raised to the status of an integral part of the British Empire from her present status of a dependency? At the commencement of the reform or when the distant goal of responsible Government is reached? *'Progressive realization'* ought to mean the progressive extension of responsible Government to several departments of administration. It can hardly mean the realization of responsible Government under another form of

Government, in which the responsibility of administration does not rest on the people. The historical settings, the objects aimed at and the considerations which necessitated the new policy enunciated in the announcement of August 20th are in conflict with the proposals with regard to *'transferred subjects.'*

Niggardly Construction

The lessons of the war pointed to a recognition of the *'rights of all people to rule their own destinies.'* Britain was fighting, and is doing so even now for a world-wide recognition of this right of self-determination. Inconsistency in national character strikes at the root of national prestige and honour. These considerations and, above all, recognition of end response to the newly developed national self-esteem and pride in India led to the announcement of August 20th. The new policy was the free gift of a country, proud of its achievements in the cause of liberty and freedom, to a dependency, which had shared with her the suffering and loss of the war. In that message of August 20th we see Britanias hand stretched out to raise India to the dignified position of an integral part of the Empire. India sees the out-stretched hand. Woe be to the man who prevents Indiana to lay hold of the out-stretched hand of fellowship. Sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, India will become an integral part of the British Empire; but those who from prejudice, distrust, or unworthy motives postpone that auspicious day are the worst enemies of the British Empire in the greatest crisis to the Empire. The new policy was not a grant to his hostile subjects by an unwilling king, as the Magna Charta of King John was. It was the free voluntary and spontaneous gift of the King and the nation to the people of a dependency. There was no motive for niggardliness and a construction of the announcement which implies niggardliness is an unjustifiable imputation to the King and the Parliament.

We have to deal with a report on Indian Constitutional reforms. It is necessary to clear the ground for criticism on the proposals contained in the Report.

The proposals affect the well-being of the largest population under any single Government in the history of the world. Criticisms have already on the proposals been made in the National Congress, in Conferences, and a Committee of the non-official members of the Imperial Council is now deliberating with a view to suggest alterations in the reform scheme. My observations are meant for the people of Orissa, and they will deal primarily with the proposals affecting the Provincial Government. That is my excuse for inviting your attention to certain general principles.

Nature of Criticism

I should ask you to proceed first to have an intelligent conception of constitution generally; next to understand what the present constitution of India is, and lastly to judge whether the proposals suggested can be grafted on the existing constitution so as to produce an organism having inherent vitality for present action and future development. What is a constitution? Austin defines constitution 'as that which fixes the structure of the supreme Government.' Sir George Cornewall Lewis defines it *'as the arrangement and distribution of the sovereign power in the community.'*

Classification of construction

From the earliest date in the history of the human race constitutions have been classed under three general heads. When the sovereign power is centred in one person it is monarchy, when it is wielded by a few it is aristocracy or oligarchy, when it descends to many, it is democracy. This is a quantitative classification. There are, at the present day, constitutions which cannot be classed under any of these

three heads. The English constitution is an instance of this. It has therefore been called a mixed constitution. This quantitative classification having been found unsatisfactory, attempts have been made to differentiate the existing constitutions on a qualitative basis. We need not go into an examination of these classification, for though the quantitative classification may not apply to all forms of Government now in operation, the numerical differentia hold good now as they did when Hobbes wrote the following lines :-

Hobbes classification

The difference of commonwealths consisteth in the difference of the Sovereign or the Person representative of all and every one of the multitude. It is manifest there can be but three kinds of Commonwealth. For the representative must need be one man or more; and if more then it is the Assembly of all, or but of a part. When the Representative is one man then is Commonwealth a Monarchy; when an assembly of all that will come together, then it is a Democracy or Popular Commonwealth; when an assembly of a part only, then it is called an Aristocracy. Other kind of Commonwealth there can be none; for either one or more or all must have the Sovereign power. ...For they, that are discontented under Monarchy call it Tyranny; and they that are displeased with Aristocracy call it Oligarchy; so also they which find themselves grieved under a Democracy call it Anarchy (which signifies want of Government): ... and yet I think' ... no man believes that want of Government is any new kind of Government; nor by the same reason ought they to believe that the Government is of one kind when they like it, and another when they dislike it, or are oppressed by the Governors.

The nature of India's constitution

The Government of India in which I include the Provincial administration is run by the Indian Civil Service (by which I mean the esperit de corps and traditions of the service and not the individuals who belong to the service). Remove the Indian Civil Service from the administrative machinery and you are left with the head of the Imperial Government and the heads of the administrations in the major provinces. The Civil Service is the heart, which circulates vital activity through all parts of this huge organism. It has been entrusted with this responsibility for over a century but it is still a foreign organ. A century's juxtaposition notwithstanding, this heart has not developed any ligament to form a bond of union with the organism, which it is meant to nourish and develop. The representatives of the Civil Service are born and educated in the United Kingdom. They breathe the atmosphere of responsible government till they embark for India to fill the responsible office of the heart of the British Indian Empire.

Men who were descendants of the noble British nation and who spent the most impressionable period of life amidst British institutions, have after a century's labour given India a Government, which has been described by the illustrious authors of the report in the following terms, which are to be found in different parts of the report:- *'an absolute Government,' 'It is bureaucratic and naturally less anxious to move than responsible Government.'* One of the authors of the Report, namely the Right Hon'ble Secretary of State said on a memorable occasion in the House of Commons :- *'The Government of India is too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too antedeluvian to be of any use for the modern purposes we have in view.'*

Indian Civil Service

The Indian Civil servant is an exception to the poet's words *'the child is the father of the man'*. The child of democracy develops into a bureaucrat, when the average Civil servant retires; his experience in Indian administration is not of any value to the Empire. We do not know any instance where experience of the Indian Civil Service has been considered as a qualification for a minister in the United Kingdom or in the Dominions of the Empires. While in service he is a stranger in India, on his retirement he is a stranger to political life in his mother country.

Here we have men recruited for a service in a foreign country wielding the executive power of a Government. They have no abiding interest in the country. They come for pay and pension. While in the country they lead an exclusive life. It is due to this love of exclusiveness that we have in every town a part set apart as 'European quarter'. Yet these foreigners, these birds of passage wield the executive power. The history of civilized nations does not furnish a parallel to this. Where is the nation, which has by progressive stages developed a responsible Government out of such a constitution?

I have compared the Indian Civil Service to the heart of this immense political organism. This heart has grown in extent and power to the loss of activity and virility in the extremities of the organism. The inherent property of contraction necessary for the supply of blood to the extremities is wanting; the result is the growth of the heart and in animation in the lower extremities and loss of activity in the upper.

Problem unusually difficult

Compare the powers which the Indian Civil Service had in old days with what it has now. This will give us an idea of the developments of its power. The blue books of the

Parliament in the early decades of the last century contain frequent discussion in the Parliament on matters relating to Orissa; but now the Indian budget is presented to empty benches. I can vouch for the truth of the statement that some prominent members in the House of Commons are not aware of the existence of Orissa.

Panchayats

The ancient indigenous institutions, which distributed power and responsibility to competent people, have disappeared. It is proposed in the Reforms report to develop the *panchayat* system. Who is responsible for the contraction of its sphere of responsibility? The *panchayat* system is not a western institution. Its responsibilities and powers even now are in full operation as regards social matters, but it has been disarmed of its powers over matters - Civil and Criminal. These powers have been absorbed by the local representative of the Civil Service.

Chowkidari

The present *Chowkidari* arrangement in Orissa has proved a source of universal discontent. Go to any village and talk to the people and in five minutes you will find out that the *Chowkidari* arrangement is a running sore in their life. The introduction of the change has resulted in adding to the power of the foreign agency.

Problem unusually difficult

There is not the slightest doubt that His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State had a task before them, which, whether we take its magnitude, the number of difficult questions to be grappled, the nature and number of conflicting interests to be reconciled and the complexity, which each of these subjects presented in the effort to work out the details, has no parallel in the history of statesmanship

in the world. Hercules is admired for merely clearing the accumulations of a negligent age. The task before the illustrious authors of the report was not of a destructive character only, it was neither entirely constructive. The difficulties of the task were enhanced in a considerable degree by the necessity to preserve an existing fabric and at the same time make it serve a different purpose by additions and slight alterations. I shall be able to give you an idea of the difficulties of their task by a few extracts from the Report:-

> As the principle of popular control is admitted into the Government through the medium of the legislative councils, some means must be devised of enabling the established service to fall in with the new order of things. Naturally there will be many men to whom the change will be irksome.

In another part of the report occurs, the following passage:

> We shall discuss the case of the public services in a latter chapter. But we have definitely to secure their essential interests because we believe that they are indispensable to the future of India and also because, as has always been recognised at similar periods of transition, His Majesty's services have the strongest possible right to be secured by His Majesty's Government. At a time when great changes are coming in India, the possible consequences and reactions of which no one can foresee, the element of experience and continuity which the services supply will be of such value that in the interests of India herself they must be secured.
>
> Moreover in the educative work of the immediate future they have an important part to play. Not only will they provide the executive machinery of Government, it will be their part to assist, as only they

can do, in the training of the rural classes (or self-government, their help will be greatly needed to explain the new principles of Government to many who will find them strange. Meanwhile we repeat that the government must recognise its responsibilities to those whom it has recruited, and must retain the power to protect and support them in the discharge of the duties imposed upon them.

Here we find that men to whom the proposed change in administration will be 'irksome' will provide the executive machinery of Government, assist in the training of the rural classes for self-government and explain the principles of Government to men who will find them strange.

The periodical commissions will enquire into the administration of the transferred subjects. If it is found unsatisfactory the concession will be withdrawn. Will the commission make enquiries to find out how far the services did the duties entrusted to them? What will be the result if it is found that they failed in due discharge of their duties? The penal provisions of the scheme are one-sided. There is a good deal in the scheme, which will bring on disgrace on the people for the neglect, and recalcitrant attitude of individual members of the services.

The present administration of India is a pyramid resting on its apex. A foreign service bears the burden of the Indian Empire. The present line of political centre of gravity has to be maintained and yet provision has to be made for a distribution of the growing weight over a wider area. The problem presents difficulties, which can be measured only by those who try to solve them.

The report contains an illustrative list of transferred subjects. The guiding principle in the selection of these subjects, laid down in the report, is:

> **Selection of transferred subjects**
> Include in the transferred list those departments, which afford most opportunity for local knowledge and social service, those in which Indians have shown themselves to be keenly interested, those in which mistakes, which may occur, though serious, would not be irremediable, and those which stand most in need of development.

It is admitted that the Indians have evinced keen interest and special aptitude to administer the transferred subjects. Mistakes in administration are not irremediable. What reasonable objection can there be to make the people responsible for the administration of these subjects. It is admitted that those subjects stand most in need of development, which means that the present administration has failed to produce the desired development, and yet it is proposed that the authorities of an unsuccessful administration should select the ministers, who would be responsible for an experiment, and the result of which after five years, would decide whether the initial concessions made to the Province should be kept untouched or withdrawn. Is there any item in the list of transferred subjects where even gross mis-management would mean danger to the British Empire? The answer to this question must be in the negative.

Piso's Justice

The minister should be elected by the Legislative Council, which also has the power to remove him if he fails to give satisfaction. It should be remembered that the position of a minister in the scheme before us has no precedent in the history of the world. On the success or otherwise of the administration entrusted to him depends the future progress of the people. The scheme provides for the removal of a subject from the transferred to the reserved list in case of

unsatisfactory administration. This means that the people should be deprived of a privilege for the mistakes of one over whom they have no control through their representatives in Council. This reminds one of Piso's Justice. Piso condemned a man to death for having murdered a man. When the condemned man was about to be executed the man alleged to have been murdered turned up. Thereupon the centurion sent the condemned man to Piso. Thereupon Piso passed sentences of death on all three, that is, the condemned man, the centurion and the man supposed to have been murdered. The condemned man was to be executed because a sentence of death had been passed on him. The centurion was to be executed because he disobeyed orders, and the man supposed to have been murdered was to be executed because he had been the cause of death of two innocent men. The people are to be punished because the reform proposals ordain their punishment, the minister is to be punished because he failed to fulfill the expectations of the Governor who appointed him, and the transferred subject is to be retransferred to the reserved list because that has been the cause of punishment of two innocent parties.

Nomination of member and minister

The following extract from the Reforms Report relating to the appointment by nomination of minister into Executive Council shows how the nomination system has worked.

> We are aware that the nominations made to the-executives have not always given satisfaction. There has been a disposition to regard the men appointed as chosen because they are safe and not likely to give Government trouble, and if the legislature and the executive are to work smoothly together; it is, we agree, necessary to make appointments which command confidence and ensure efficiency and ability

Election, not Nomination: Reasons

The confidence, efficiency and ability necessary can be secured by election. The members of the Executive Council as well as the ministers should be elected by the Legislature. The Legislature's power of removal should be restricted to ministers and should not apply to the members in Council who will deal with the reserved subjects. If this be not acceptable to the authorities' an alternative method may be adopted. The members in Council and the ministers should be nominated by the standing committees connected with the reserved and transferred subjects respectively, the Governor having the power to direct a second nomination, if he has sufficient reasons to disapprove of the nominations in the first instance.

The reasons on which Council government is preferred to administration by a single man apply with equal force to the appointment of the members of Council. These reasons are given in the report in the following words:-

> Collective decisions which are the result of bringing together different points of view are more likely to be judicial and well weighed than those of a single mind.

Qualification of the Executive Member

Hitherto the official designation of Governor was restricted to the rulers of the major provinces. In other cases the Indian Civil Service supplied the Provincial rulers whose official designation was 'Lieutenant Governor'. It seems from para 219 and 220 of the Reform Report that with the introduction of the reform scheme all Provincial rulers should be called Governors. Governors have generally been gentlemen who have experience in the working of responsible Government in other parts of the British Empire. This experience is wanting in the Indian Civil Servant, whose experiences have been gained under what the Reform Report calls *'a system of absolute Government.'*

The ultimate goal is responsible Government in all the departments of administration. The reserved subjects will in future be included in the list of transferred subjects. The scheme contained in the Report is *'a transitional constitution containing within itself potentialities of advance.'* The words are taken from the speech of His Excellency the Viceroy. In a province where the governor is a member of the Civil Service it is desirable that the non-Indian member of the Executive Council should not be a member of that service. He should be an outsider who has experience of administration either in the United Kingdom or in the Dominions. The services of a person with knowledge of the principles of responsible Government and their application to the problems before the Provincial Government would not only be of immense help to the ministers, but it would also develop the potentialities of advance of which the Viceroy spoke in his speech. Without this the bureaucratic part of the Provincial Government will not have any potentiality to advance. It is open to the Governor to appoint members without portfolios, so he would not be without official help.

Gentlemen outside the Indian Civil Service have been appointed members of the Viceregal Executive Council. English lawyers without Indian experience are appointed as His Majesty's judges in the High Courts of India. This serves the useful purpose of ensuring uniformity in the standard of justice in the two countries; it also keeps Indians abreast of the English Courts of justice in their application of legal principles to particular cases.

The Highest Court of appeal sits in England. The proposals in the Report contain provisions for the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee. It is desirable that persons with some knowledge of the procedures and conventions of the British constitution should be members of the Executive Government. Very great stress has been laid on the fact that the principles of responsible Government

are foreign to the Indian, and this has been urged as a reason why responsible government is not given at once even with regard to the transferred subjects. But we fail to find the slightest reference to the ignorance on the part of the European official of the principles of a democratic government.

Blind leading the blind

When the Governor and the European member are members of the Indian Civil Service, who are not only ignorant of the principles of a democratic government, but have carried on a bureaucratic government for nearly a quarter of a century, constitute the Executive government, it is bound to be proof against democracy. The addition of an Indian councilor and a minister will only serve to intensify the ignorance. The reform proposals appoint these officials as the people's guide to lead them to the goal and along' the road, which leads to it. Verily, verily, this is an instance of *'blind leading the blind.'*

The History of Rsponsible Government in Canada:

The system of an elected assembly without the responsibility, which comes from participation in the executive Government, was tried in Canada. Pitt's Canada Constitutional Act of 1791 introduced this system. But the difficulty of working proved a rock on which Pitt's scheme for Canadian Government foundered. All Canada was in ferment, Lower Canada was in open rebellion. Sir Robert Peel wrote to Wellington in terms, which would suggest that *'the immediate loss of Canada was not a remote contingency.'* Lord Durham was sent out by the government. It is true that Lord Durham was recalled but his report is a valuable document on the constitutional evolution of the oversea Dominion. It contained recommendations, which formed the basis of the Canadian Union Act, which made the executive responsible to the Legislature. Durham Report makes a responsible

executive the corner-stone of the constitution. The key-note of the Durham Report is that the Crown must consent to carry on the Government through those in whom the representative members have confidence and ministers must be responsible to the local Legislature. Dr. Keeth says that *'the immediate cause of the origin of responsible government in the Dominions was the outbreak of rebellion in Canada.'* These principles should govern the transferred subjects and the ministers.

Reforms in Orissa

I now come to the portion of the Reforms Report which deals with the interests of Orissa. The burning question with us for some years has been the emancipation from the subordination to which the Oriya people have been subjected by reason of the Oriya-speaking tracts having been annexed to the tail end of territories under several Provincial administrations. Representations on the subject have been made; the proceedings of public meetings have been communicated to the authorities. A deputation waited on His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and presented a memorial on the subject. It is not necessary now to repeat our arguments, to describe our loss or to paint the injustice, which British administration has done to us. My reason for abstaining to go over the old ground is to be found in the following words of the Report:- *'In Orissa and Berar at all events it seems to us that the possibility of instituting sub-provinces need not be excluded from consideration at a very early date.'* The conception of the eventual future of India, which the illustrious authors of the reform proposals had in their mind, is *...a sister-hood of states, self-government in all matters of purely local or provincial interests, in some cases corresponding to existing provinces, in others perhaps modified in* area according to the character and economic interests of their people.

The acquisition of territories in the days of the East India

Company was piece-meal. The conception of a vast Empire was foreign to them. The problems which now loom large in connection with a responsible Government ahead were not dreamt of. A company of merchants became rulers of a great Empire. The process by which this was done will not be intelligible to or approved by British Statesmanship of the present day. Equally unintelligible to the statesmen of those days would have been the reform proposals now before us.

Adam Smith said: *'The trading spirit of the East India Company makes them very bad sovereigns.'* The reasons which weighed with the East India Company lost their weight with the termination of their rule. Consideration of an opposite character now dominates the policy of Government. Those considerations arise from a desire to promote the well-being of the people, and what is more to train them to realize their responsibilities as citizens of the Empire at a time when the Empire is involved in a world-war. Imagine for a moment that the Viceroy and the Provincial rulers with their Councilors engaged in private trade for their personal gain, what will be the result at the end of one year? How would the English and other civilized nations view the result of this? The British Cabinet, both the houses of Parliament would be ablaze with indignation. The heat of the indignation will within a few minutes be felt at this end of the telegraphic line. In no time the grievances of the people, which were due to this combination of sovereign power with commercial activities will be redressed at once. The rulers and their councilors will have condign punishments meted out to them, and what is more - disgrace., dishonour and public contempt will be heaped on their heads;' consequences anyone who knows the Britishers sense of honour, can predict with the inspired confidence of a prophet. But is it consistent with the British sense of honour to perpetuate the effects of a wrong policy in the past, when

they can be remedied without injury to others and with decided advantage to the people whom they affect? It is admitted that the business of Government would be simplified if administrative units were smaller and homogeneous. There is no doubt that this advantage would be gained by forming an administrative unit of the Oriya-speaking tracts. As regards to the advantages to be gained by this measure I cannot do better than reproduce the words of the statesmen who are the authors of the Report:-

> **Advantages of small units on linguistic basis.**
> We have seen how historical reasons brought them about. We cannot doubt that the business of Government would be simplified if administrative units were both smaller and more homogeneous; and when we bear in mind the prospect of the immense burdens of Government in India being transferred to comparatively inexperienced hands, such considerations acquire additional weight. It is also a strong argument in favour of linguistic or racial units of government, that by making it possible, to conduct the business of legislation in the vernacular, they would contribute to draw into the arena of public affairs men who were not acquainted with English.

The Report disapproves of redistribution of official areas by official action, but they recommend such redistribution by consent.

Orissa under Bihar

The position of Orissa in the province of Bihar and Orissa was assigned to it without consulting Orissa. The dispatch on the subject clearly proves that the interests of Orissa were not at all consulted in the scheme, which resulted in undoing the partition of Bengal and in carving out a new province.

Lord Hardinge's despatch

The dispatch from the Government of India which resulted in the creation of the new Province shows the relics, if not the survival, of the old policy of expediency which treats millions of people as a pawn on the chess board. Millions of people are moved about with no more attention to their interest that is paid to the pawn by the player.

The dispatch of the Government of India which resulted in the birth of the province of Bihar and Orissa fully illustrates these observations. The people of Orissa were not consulted. No one except the signatories to the dispatch knew that any such redistribution of territories was in contemplation. None of the signatories knew Orissa. The unusual spelling of the word shows their ignorance of the people. What are the reasons given in the dispatch for the transfer of Orissa? I shall quote the portion of the dispatch which relates to Orissa.

> The Oriyas, like the Biharies, have little in common with the Bengalies, and we propose to leave Orissa with Bihar and Chotanagpur. We believe that this arrangement will well accord with popular sentiment in Orissa and will be welcome to Bihar as presenting a seaboard to the Province. We need hardly add that we have considered various alternatives such as making over of Chotanagpur or of Orissa to the Central Provinces and the creation of a Chief Commissionership instead of Lieutenant Governorship for Bihar, Chotanagapur and Orissa.

Let us examine the reasons given here. The Oriyas like the Biharees have little in common with the Bengalis. A school boy would give this argument the following syllogistic form. The tiger has nothing in common with the cow. The goat has nothing in common with the cow. Therefore the tiger and the goat can live together comfortably.

Nativity of baby province

The statement is opposed to historical facts. Chaitanya the great reformer of Bengal was an Oriya and he spent the last days of his life in Orissa. There is a domiciled Bengali community to be found in the villages of Orissa; their social intercourses with Oriyas are intimate and pleasing to both. A large number of Oriyas find employment in Bengal. None of these conditions exist when we consider the relation of Orissa with Bihar. I have said that the signatories of the dispatch did not evidently care to know the popular sentiment in Orissa on the subject. If they cared to take any note of Orissa's sentiment, they would have found it in memorials to authorities and even in papers published under the authority of the House of Commons. But it suited the immediate object they had in view to avoid fact and resort to *belief*. The prospect of a seaboard to Bihar loomed large in the imagination of the authors of the proposal. Has any step been taken to build a harbour in Puri ? This is another instance of their ignorance of the condition of the province. One does not know whether in making these statements and proposals the authors of the dispatch counted on the credulity or the ignorance of the India Office. The truth, as subsequent events have proved, seems to be that Bihar occupied a subordinate position under the Bengal Government. It was anxious to be elevated to higher position and have another people over whom they might exercise the powers of an intermediary ruling race. It seems from the dispatch that there was an alternative proposal to place Bihar under a Chief Commissionership. To avoid the latter and gain the former object it was necessary to increase the territorial area and population in the proposed new province. These were the reasons for including Orissa in the new Province. All this becomes intelligible when we remember a distinguished patriot of Bihar was one of the signatories of the dispatch.

Orissa's national consciousness

The Reform proposals are in response to a new sense of self-esteem which the war had awakened. The past history of Orissa is replete with achievements in various fields of human activity. They have always been a source of inspiration to the present generation. This inspiration feeds the national conscious-ness, which is gaining in intensity with the advance of education and fresh evidence of past national progress, which the labours of men engaged in research work bring to light. Orissa will not yield to the Biharees the position of an intermediary ruling race. If the present position is not improved, there will be friction, which is not desirable in the interests of both Bihar and Orissa. Law abiding and peaceful citizenship is recommended in school books but potentiality for creating unrest and start agitation carry the prizes. Orissa has yet to learn this. The concessions to Bihar were the price paid to prevent agitation. The dispatch says *'this belief will, unless a remedy be found, give rise to agitation in the near future.'*

Intermediary ruling races

The demands of the war and of the proposed responsible government have put a higher value on loyalty combined with development of a spirit of sacrifice in the interests of the Empire. A potential spirit of unrest must have a discount put on it. National consciousness and self-esteem ought to develop into national pride and sustain the spirit of sacrifice. Realization of the responsibilities, which the new atmosphere has given birth to, is impossibility without the growth of the national consciousness. Allow a group of people to occupy the position of an intermediary ruling race and you store up trouble for the future from the dominant race and deprive the empire of the loyal support from another race. Allow one race to

exercise a dominant influence over another and you mar the glorious picture of a sister-hood of states in India of the future.

In their conception of the eventual Indian Empire the authors of the report see, as any statesman ought to see, alteration of the territorial areas of the provinces in existence.

Responsibilities of reform

The growth of population, not to speak of numerous other causes which may supervene, will necessitate contraction of the present territorial area of Provincial administration. The introduction of reforms will be the dawn of a new life. The reforms will open out a new field of activity and impose fresh responsibilities, in the discharge of which unanimity of thought and unity of purpose will be greatly in requisition. Our thoughts and opinions are the result of our past experiences reflected in the consciousness of the present moment. Our experiences are the result of the action on self-consciousness by the environments of life.

Lord Curzon's partition and Official nervousness

Similar experiences ensure convergence of thought. Traditions and past history are unfailing sources of inspiration. They supply powerful motives for action in critical moments in a nation's life, and guard the nation's honour with the courage and readiness to sacrifice, with which the gallant British soldier guards the Union Jack in the battle field. A population which has developed a common national consciousness is better equipped for progress.

Common Language

The mixing up for administrative purposes of populations whose national consciousness is fed by separate springs in their past history is a huge mistake in statesmanship. Lord

Curzon's attrition was grave error, because it aimed a blow at the national consciousness of a population. For a long time before that it had been felt that Bengal had grown too big for a Lieutenant-Governor. Successive heads of Government felt it and complained of it, but no steps were taken to remedy this. In the meantime the national consciousness gained both in volume and intensity.

Insistent distinctive national consciousness

An attempt to split up, as it were this national consciousness and thereby reduce its volume added to its intensity, and unforeseen results followed. The Mohammedans of Bengal had never asked for a separate administration. They complained of having been left in the cold. I fear the events which followed the partition of Bengal have produced a political nervousness in some quarters. Every change of administration is shelved as fraught with unrest. It is unfortunate that the Hon'ble Mr. Sarma moved a general resolution for redistribution of the whole country on a wrong basis. A common language is an additional facility in the pursuit of common object.

Impellent and deterrent

English has been adopted as the common language by educated India. It is becoming the political language of India. One should look for an insistent distinctive national consciousness as the basis of administrative unit. This distinctive national consciousness of the present moment must have continuity with the past, and resemble a running stream showing continuity with its original spring in a distant land. The reform proposals when introduced will, form what I have said, add to the importance of a distinctive national conscious-ness. What I have said above shows its importance in supplying motives and facilities for action. This is so in a population actuated by the same national

consciousness, but its deterrent influences should also be noted.

Foreign rule

India is ruled by a foreign nation. A foreign rule labours under certain disadvantages. Birtish rule in India is a record of mistakes committed, attempts to minimize the irritation inherent in a foreign rule and bring it into line with the legitimate feelings of Indians. The proposed reforms are a notable and laudable attempt in that direction.

Creation of intermediatary rulers

The creation of intermediary ruling races aggravates in a great measure the national feeling towards a foreign rule. The national consciousness determines the boundary line between national and foreign. Other considerations such as distance, language make the line thicker and more distinct. Where the population under an administration is moved by divergent national consciousness there is the risk of one section rising to the position of an intermediary ruling race by occupying positions of influence in the administrative machinery. This had been so in the past. It is so now.

Minister from an intermediary ruling race

Under the new scheme the minister will have under his administration those departments which deal with the concerns of daily life such as primary education, sanitation &c. He will also have the power of fresh taxation. When the minister comes from a different race, the irritation of an intermediate rule which was hitherto felt only by the educated classes will be extended to the masses. Racial feeling among the masses has a religious import. An Oriya *Kayasta* will not eat with the *Kayasta* of Bihar. The administration of the transferred subject is bound to be a

failure and friction and discontent and irritation must follow, unless timely regard be paid to the national consciousness of the Oriyas. It is our duty to bring this to the notice of the authorities with all the emphasis which the importance of the subject demands. This will form the subject matter of resolutions.

Reasons against Subprovince

A council Government has been decided. The head of each administrative unit should be a Governor in Council, the pay of the Governor is to be regulated by the financial position of the area to be administered. Prospective taxation for the ministerial administration forms a new contribution in it. These considerations diminish the force of the reasons for the creation of a sub-province. Provincial autonomy is introduced to promote provincial development. Provincial progress to be deserving of the name and to be in unison with the main object the illustrious authors of the reforms have in view, should ensure and equal distribution of the opportunities for progress to the different sections of the population. The Legislative Council will influence the executive. The influence will depend on the numerical strength of the representative of each race in the council. This will affect the interests of the Oriyas in the Madras as well as Bihar administration. Their representatives will be a microscopic minority in these councils. The creation of a sub-province will not improve their position in this respect. What objects the authors of the reforms have in view in recommending a sub-province is not known. It is perhaps intended that the administration should be confined to the transferred subjects, if so this will introduce complications, which will be avoided by raising Orissa to the status of an administrative unit and annexing the Oriya tracts of Ganjam to it.

Grand Committee

I need not refer to some of the proposals in the report on which the non-official members of the province have expressed an opinion, and where I agree with their opinion. One of these is the proposal for the institution of a Grand Committee. This is an unnecessary addition to the powers of the executive government, which are sufficient to check any of the powers by the people's representative in council.

Communal representation

The authors of the reforms in discussing communal representation draw upon an analogy from the history of Europe. The analogy does not hold good, because the division of the population into sections in India has been brought about by causes over which the inmates of the section have no control, These causes have imposed disabilities on certain sections of the population, The untouchable classes are not responsible for the disabilities of their present social position. The removal of these disabilities depends on the development of liberal notions in the higher classes and not on their own efforts. There is no doubt that an educated man belonging to the untouchable class will covet the position of being a member of the Legislative Council. The difficulties to his attaining this position will be raised not from his caste but from other castes. It is not correct that communal representations will stereotype existing relations. I believe they will produce contrary result. Co-operation in a common cause induced by unavoidable circumstances gives opportunities for reciprocal appreciation and under the influence of this feeling, prejudice born of ancient custom, disappears in time. The Congress Musalman league has a lesson on this subject.

Minority representation

I do not think the representation of minorities by nomination will remove the barrier between the classes. It will on the contrary strengthen the dividing wall. Public opinion is opposed to the principle of nomination. The nominated members are always considered as an addition to the official element in the Council. The proposal contained in the last part of para 232 of the report is the wisest, simplest and best fitted. A number of seats should be reserved for the minorities in plural constituencies but with a general electorate,

European community

Considering the interests of the non-official European community have in this country, this principle should also apply to them. There are Europeans who have friendly attitude towards Indian aspirations and justice and our own interests demand that we should have their co-operation and fellowship in the field of politics.

Economic condition

The illustrious authors of the reform proposals have placed Indians under an everlasting debt of gratitude by looking at the political aspects of the economic condition of the country. The economic questions had hitherto been out of the range of the politician's eye-glass. The Government of India neglected to protect the economic interests of the country. India was considered a proper field for the exploitation of all Europeans. It is due to this that Germany got to dominate over the mines and markets of India. The war has opened the eyes of our rulers. They now see the importance of conserving the resources of India for the benefit of the British Empire.

Feudatory States

The reforms report contains a chapter on the native states. This province has several Feudatory States. The contents of the chapter deserve the serious consideration of the rulers of the Orissa States, their subjects and of the people of Orissa, for we are impelled by a common national consciousness.

(1918)

(Source: Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Utkal Sammilani* (1903-1936), Rourkela, 2005)

Measures against Non-Co-operationists

[Maulavi Hafiz Nazrul Haqq moved that 'this Council recommends to the Governor-in-Council to issue instructions to the District Officers to refrain from the policy of adopting repressive measures against non-cooperationists.' Mudhusudan spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, a few days ago we had a long discussion with regard to what was called the "Rainy Circular". It began with the name of "Rainy" and was expected to cool an atmosphere outside, which had become hot, but the debate made it a stormy circular.

Now, we have got reference to what has been called the "Hallett Circular". I must say at the outset that I am responsible for every word of that circular, though it has been issued over the name of Mr. Hallett. By just a reference to the wording of the circular, it will be seen that calling it the "Hallett Circular" is not fair either to the circular itself or to the author of it. I, therefore, crave your permission, and, through you, the permission of this Council, to read out that circular which will show the exact nature of the circular, the purpose it was intended to serve and whether there is any possibility of its being misunderstood or whether any attempt whatever has been made to exercise any sort of coercion over the wishes, intelligence and understanding of the people to whom this circular was addressed. The circular is addressed to the chairmen of the district boards and municipalities. Municipalities and district boards are

an integral part of the general administration of the Province. It is the duty of the office-bearers and members of these institutions to refrain from committing any act which might be construed as supporting the non-co-operation movement, which denounces co-operation in any form with the existing system of administration. The mere presence of persons, who have a share, however small, in the administration of municipalities and district boards at meetings meant to advance the cause of non-co-operation, is likely to be construed into sympathy with the object of the movement as these meetings are attended by the ignorant masses. Much stress is laid on the avowed non-violent character of the movement by the politicians' propaganda, but it must be remembered that the work of propagation is carried on by volunteers over whom the author of the political movement has no control. As people carry on the work of propagation without having direct instructions from the author of it, it is most likely that the occasion will be used by a class of men who are to be found in the population of every country for indulging in habitual lawless propensities. Political teachings undergo transformation, and during propagation this transformation is beyond the control of the author of these teachings. An instance of this will be found in Mahatma Gandhi's *Satyagraha* movement. He admits that his teachings have been misunderstood by the people and have produced a result entirely different from what he had desired.

The Government at the present moment are doing all they can to make the people realize their responsibility of self-government and to take an active interest in it. It is absolutely necessary that those responsible for the administration of district boards and municipalities should avoid even appearing at any place which might be construed into being in sympathy with the non-cooperation movement. The Local Government in the Ministry of Local Self-

Government invite the attention of all district boards and municipalities to circular number so and so, that refers to "Rainy's circular", an extract from which is annexed. This circular was rendered necessary because in some districts, Government officers attended meetings held in support of non-co-operation, and their presence at these meetings was interpreted as showing sympathy with the movement. In inviting the attention of district boards and municipalities, the Local Government in the Ministry of Local Self Government desire that these institutions should take such measures as they consider suitable to prevent their office-bearers, members and employees from attending non-co-operation meetings or doing any other act which might be construed as being in support of, or in sympathy with, or acquiescence in the non-co-operation movement. Leave it to them to decide. The chairmen of district boards and municipalities are requested to report through the proper channel what measures they have adopted in order to give effect to the suggestions of the Government. The Government have left it entirely to them as to what measures they are going to adopt and they have been asked to report.

Now, the last speaker, the Rai Bahadur over there, said – I could not exactly follow the words but from certain words which reached my ears, I was not aware that I was particularly unfortunate in my auricular appendages - that there should be discretion, and the reference was also made with a view to differentiate between the nominated members and elected members and that while the nominated members may be dictated to a certain course of conduct, the discretion of the elected members should not in any way be assailed. That was the purport of the remarks as I understood it. Now, I do not care, nor is it necessary for my purpose at the present moment, to refer to any acts or deeds or the plans of non-co-operators as they have been called, but I should

take the word itself, "non-co-operation" as it has been interpreted by. the actions of its followers from time to time and ask whether this Council – I am addressing every member of this Council, the nominated as well as the elected members, and the officials – are not bound to take a defiant attitude with regard to those who call themselves as advocates of non-co-operation. What is non-co-operation? Who are the followers of it? When did this Council first come in contact with them? What were the manifestations, the initial manifestations of their activities and energies? Are you not aware that during the election period people went about preaching that you must not go to the Council, that it is a place where there is a slavish mentality and where Satan himself sits as the president of a workshop where they forge the chains which bind all human intellect. Was not this the description that was given of this Council Chamber to candidates for election and yet here we are? If we are to be interpreted by the non-co-operation-*wallahs* by what name will they call us? They call us people who have assembled in Satan's workshop to work out the destruction, the ruination of their own country. Now, this is a place where we have, as it were, subjected ourselves to a depth of degradation which is to be found in a place where Satan alone resides.

Now, whatever may the difference between elected and nominated members or between officials and non-officials, there is one point on which we are all agreed. Before anyone of us took any part in the deliberations of this Council, everyone had to swear allegiance to the King. There is no difference between nominated and elected members here, and by taking that oath of allegiance to the King we have bound ourselves to work out *swaraj* – if I may use the expression which has been adopted even by His Gracious Majesty in his latest message to India - we have decided that we must work out *swaraj* within this Council Chamber

within certain restrictions. Our journey to our destination rests through a road which has two boundary lines – the Union Jack – defining the limits of the road. Outside these limits are a class of men who tells us, "Where are you going?" They tell us "we are going to have destruction. That is a place where you will meet Satan – a place where you will find your country ruined and destroyed – there you will find the wrecks and ruins of your country". And is this the state of description which we should allow to go unchallenged? Is not the Council Chamber the place where the first and greatest politician in India, Dadabhoy Naoroji, said that the battle of India should be fought? Is not the Council Chamber the place where men like Gokhale, of revered memory, said that we must play our part and make every effort to obtain the freedom of India? Is that not the place where we should fight out the battle for this country? Am, I, after having been associated with this Council work for over 30 years, to stand still and be the silent target of all these assaults and be accused of working out the destruction of my own country in this Chamber? Of course it is open to everybody who says "I denounce that oath of mine and would go out and join and sympathize with the non-co-operation movement". But what have the non-co-operation done? What definition have they put upon us? What designation have they assigned to us? What is our position in this Council? Is it not the place where we are to work out the salvation of India? What is our position in the words, in the language and in the phraseology of the non-co-operators? And if we are to take that into consideration, I am sure everybody will agree with me here, not only in this Council Chamber but outside as well, that these are millions of people whose custodians see no distinction between the duty of the Government to maintain law an and order and the policy of repression. As I suspect, Sir, that this line of defence is likely to be adopted by the speakers from the

official benches, I should like to say a few words to show that a policy of repression does exist.

(1921)

(*Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921, dated 19 March 1921, pp.723-26, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.340-344)

District Boards and Free Primary Education

[Maulavi Hafiz Nazrul Haqq moved: 'This Council recommends to the Government that the District Boards in the Province be directed to devote at least 10% of their income for primary education.' Madhusudan spoke on this motion.]

'Sir, this is a motion which touches both sides of the transferred subjects, namely primary education and the district boards. So far as primary education is concerned, my friend, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Fakhr-ud-din has explained the situation very fully. I need not therefore waste the time of the Council by further remarks, but I should most respectfully and, at the same time, emphatically invite the attention of this Council to the importance of making suggestions or passing resolutions which would put limitations on the powers of these boards. The question for consideration now – and this is a question of the greatest importance at this period of the life of these local bodies – is whether these local bodies should be allowed an opportunity to use their discretion without any outside control or restraint in the discharge of the duties and the responsibilities which the present system has brought in, or whether they should have restraints, guidance and orders from this Council, or elsewhere, to guide them in the discharge of their duties. Our course should be such as would develop that spirit, that power, that willingness to work which would ultimately produce responsible

Government in India. Are we likely to arrive at that destination - I had almost used the word destiny of India – by putting fetters on the powers of the local bodies, like some parents who do not like to concede any discretion to their children; or should we give them a fair chance to exercise their own discretion and powers without putting any fetters? I do not like to say anything, but at the same time this Council may do one thing. If it is the intention of the Council to attach importance to any particular branch of the responsibilities and duties of the district boards, they may very well express their opinion without doing so in such a manner as would place limitations on the powers of the board. If it were said that this Council attaches great importance to primary education, and this Council hopes that the district boards, wherever they can, will do their best in this matter that would perhaps further the purposes of this Council, better than having 10 per cent of the income earmarked. We should bear in mind that the district board fund is composed of incomes from many sources. Government gives a grant and would the district board be justified in spending on primary education the Government grant which is earmarked for certain other purposes, and would they be justified in using funds earmarked for education for digging wells for water? I beg to be excused for inviting the attention of this Council to the fact that this is a Legislative Council where law is made and will have to be made, to bind the world, and consequently resolutions passed here are something in the nature almost of legislative enactments. Therefore in construing a resolution, we must construe it by the words as they are in the resolutions "Ten per cent of their income". Government grants two lakhs for water-supply. That is an income, but it is earmarked, and you cannot spend 10 per cent of that on primary education. I do not like to express any opinion, but of course if the Council passes a resolution, if the resolution is as it must be in the form of a

recommendation to Government, and if the resolution is of such a nature that it is inconsistent with the existing provision of any law, or not consistent with any resolution already passed, it would be the duty of the minister to give his advice to Government, in a way suggested by the existing conditions or legislative provisions.

(1921)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council,1921,* dated 21 March 1921, pp.786, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator,* Rourkela, 1980, pp.344-346)

Room for Mohammedan Prayers

[Sd. Mubarak Ali moved that 'this Council recommends to the Government to take immediate steps to set apart a room in this Council building for Mohammedan prayer.' Madhusudan Das spoke on this resolution,]

'Sir, I have been entrusted with a very unpleasant duty on behalf of the Bihar and Orissa Government to reply to this resolution. I do not know what reasons persuaded my colleagues to select me as their representative on this occasion to reply to a resolution of this nature. But, perhaps, it seems my age and my connection with the various Legislative Councils had something to do with it. An old man certainly appreciates more and puts a far higher value on religion than a young man. Nobody appreciates so much, admires so much, the importance of devout feeling in the members of the Council when they are discussing matters of importance and of interest to the millions in this Province. The very fact that we have amongst us so many Mohammedan brethren who actually want to associate their religious feelings with the deliberations of this Council makes us hope and believe that the deliberations of this Council will always be conducted with a degree of serenity with questions of importance ought always to command.
I have been connected with one Council or another for many years. I may almost say without fear of contradiction, now that my revered friend Mr. Gokhale is no longer among us, that I have at least served in the Council as long as anybody

else in India. And I may say without fear of contradiction as well, that I have never heard or seen this question raised in any Council. Of course, the hon'ble mover of this resolution has given expression to a spirit of sweet tolerance of other religious spirits. That is very admirable no doubt, but in a place like this which actually stands on a par with the same sort of institution as the House of Commons, we know that traditions and customs really play a very important part in these matters. I do not like to refer to any sentiments or to give expression to anything that may just bring into the discussion anything which may actually give to the discussion any acuteness and take away the atmosphere, the sacred, solemn, serene atmosphere in which I wish this question to be discussed.

We have naturally amongst us representatives of all religions. If we have not the representatives of all religions on this day, surely we may safely say that there is nothing to prevent our having in this Council Chamber, representatives of all religions. We have Brahmanism, we have Hinduism, we have Jainism, we have Mohammedanism, but we have hitherto kept out one *ism* and I am very anxious, and all of us are very anxious, that the worst *ism* should be kept out, and that is schism. So long as we do not introduce schism, religion, every religion, can be considered as most sacred by a believer of another religion. Of course there might be somebody of some other religion who might demand a place for prayer. I am not naming any religion in particular, because I want to avoid anything that may discolour the discussion – give it the colour of schism. You know the House of Commons is most conservative. Christianity has divided itself into sections and denominations, but still it has kept up everything in such a way that there never has been any discussion on this subject. Conservatism is a virtue in these matters. The Council Chamber has been an institution, we are assured, long

enough to have its own traditions and customs.

Personally, I feel very great obligations to the Mohammedan community. I am glad I have got this opportunity of giving expression to my sincere gratitude to that community. Several times, when I have stood for election, Mohammedan communities have always voted for me, and I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to them; and I should feel very grateful if my Mohammedan brethren who are members of this Council would condescend to accept a very humble offer from me, and that is, that I personally would provide two private tents, which would be set apart for them. They would be prayer tents for the Mohammedan members of this Council. They would be provided with such tents as officers use in the rainy season. These tents would be provided with wooden platforms so that in the rainy weather there might not be wet ground and every inconvenience whatever would be avoided. I shall be grateful if my friends will accept this as a sincere recognition of all the kindness I have received from the community and I hope this would be acceptable to the members of the Council.

(1921)

(*Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921,dated 31 March 1921, pp.1051-52, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.351-353)

Franchise for Women

[Devaki Prasad Sinha moved the resolution on 23 November 1921: This Council recommends to the Government (a) that, the sex disqualification for registration on the electoral rolls, prescribed by rule 7(1)(b) of the Bihar and Orissa Electoral Rolls be removed entirely and that regulations be made providing that women shall not be disqualified for registration in the electoral rolls by reason only of their sex; and (b) that in making provision in such regulations for the manner in which women shall record their votes, due regard shall be had to their habits and customs. Madhusudan Das spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, I am thankful to Rev. Mr. Whitley for pointing out that a matter like this during the course of discussion should have been associated with language and remarks suited to the solemnity of the subject. It is to be regretted that this was not realized by some of the speakers at least. I took upon it not as a measure which would add anything to the powers of women of the country, but I have read the resolution carefully and every time I have read it my attention was drawn to the word "disqualification". It is not a question of conferring certain rights, or of denying the rights to a particular class of persons, but making the sex itself a disqualification and making this disqualification for a sex which has always been called the gentler sex – a sex which is a repository of whatever is loving, tender, affectionate and

divine in human nature. Man has only the sterner virtues of humanity, a masculine sternness. Woman is the embodiment of all that is divine, of all that is godly, of all that is loving, and these constitute humanity. Go throughout India and you will find the whole country is studded with temples as the firmament above is studded with stars; go throughout the country, you will find temples, mosques and other places of worship. What do they show? Do they not show that India is *par excellence* religious? The religious element predominates in the Indian nature. Look at the sacrifices that India has made in the cause of religion. If you examine the lives of some of the ascetics you will find object lessons of sacrifice. Why is it that you find they revere Mahatma Gandhi? The only reason for this is his life of sacrifice. Now what better expression or manifestation of sacrifice have we than the mother's sacrifice for her children? Whatever you may say, with whatever voice and strength you may oppose this resolution, there is this fact – that your body, your voice, your tongue with which you speak a word against a woman – these were the gifts of a woman – your mother. She made your body with her blood in her womb. She made the greatest sacrifice that she could make, and therefore you have possession of this body. Every moment of your life, your aspiration, your ambition, your joys, your sorrows, everything you experience, are the history of your life which began in your mother's womb. That is only the living temple – the living temple where God communes with man. In that temple – the mother's womb, God puts the soul into the body which the mother has brought into being with her blood. When I, as a helpless tiny child, was first ushered into this world it was her blood that sustained my life. She taught me to develop the first faculty of human nature. In these days of materialistic education people think that faith is not an intellectual faculty, but faith is as much intellectual as any other faculty. A man lives by faith, and a child after it

is born, in the early days of its life, has faith in its mother - the mother teaches him faith. When this body of mine will be left behind and my soul will depart from its earthly tenement to meet its Creator, it will be that faith, which my mother taught me, that will sustain me. Comte, the French philosopher, held that humanity is represented by mother, wife and daughter. We have been referred to a history of woman's position in other parts in the world. We have been told of her position in England; what is the difference between India and the other countries? The history of women in this country in the early period shows that there was progress. Woman did not occupy then the position that she occupies now. In the West woman was placed in a position when it was very inferior to man. Man exercised a dominating power over woman. With all possible respect for the English civilization to which I owe many things and a good deal of my present life, I must point out this fact that women in the early days of Anglo-Saxon law were treated like slaves. There is a good deal of law about witchcraft, and women were punished in courts. But compare these with India. My indignation is aroused to see that we hold this sex disqualification applies to India. Before this materialistic education was introduced we had women on the high pedestal of a deity. It is not a case of our not giving a position to women. We are doing them a great wrong by reason of their sex.

Nations are not built in a day. We may start a corporation, you may even have a Council Chamber and have two hundred members to discuss matters but that is not a nation. A nation has its history, and its traditions. Nations cannot be built by artificial means, by requisition or by sending round invitations to people to come and meet at a certain place. You know that India has had a glorious past, but the sun that shone in the firmament of India has gone down. Still I see the luster of my nation's past glory

and I am proud of my nation's past history. Shall I do anything to bring discredit on my proud nation's past history? Shall I do anything to bring discredit on my nation? Shall I say that women behaved themselves so badly that on account of their sex they ought to be disqualified? It is the disqualification which I object to. Burn and destroy the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, if you are going to say that women of India are disqualified. Destroy *Mahabharata* and destroy *Ramayana* because without Sita there would be no Ramayana and without Draupadi there would be no Mahabharata. Whatever may be said of the proverbial chivalry of the warlike Rajput nations, was it not due to the women of the Rajput nation? Have we not read of the husband who ran away from the battle-field, how his wife refused to open the door and said, "Go and die in the battle field. I would weep much rather that you died on the field and I wept as a widow than receive a coward like you as my husband?" When you have instances like that, can anyone be allowed to say that sex is a disqualification? As regards whether women should do this or that work, that is a different thing. Man has been, as I have said, influenced by foreign materialistic civilization but the Indian woman has not been influenced by outside influences. She is in the *zanana*. A *zanana* means a treasure-room. Does it not mean that that is the place where the nation has its treasures stored up? She is there and she still retains the pristine glory of the Indian woman. It is for her to decide whether she will take any part in the politics or not. I myself do not think that women necessarily should take to politics and I should be really sorry and it will be a painful and regrettable day in the history of India if Indian women take to such measures to secure their rights as has been taken by some ladies in England. The Indian woman stands on a high platform – on a high pedestal – with the magnificence of a dignified deity. You may do anything, but you still worship Saraswati and

you still worship Durga. You have in your language *shakti* which means real power. Woman's influence is very great. Why do you think that the *zanana* is a prison? It is a temple where the ancient virtues of India have been stored. We passed a resolution yesterday to give an enthusiastic welcome to the Prince of Wales. English history has the names of two females, to whose reign England owes a great deal. They are Elizabeth and Victoria. Auspicious occasions like this are associated with acts of clemency. If some people consider the *zanana* a prison, let us release the women from the prison now in connection with the Prince of Wales' visit.

There is another question. I have heard complaints by my countrymen against Englishmen for having withheld our rights from us, should we show a spirit of retaliation to the English women in our province? There are certain English women in Bihar – English women who have property qualifications, there are Parsi women who have education, and you have to decide not for the women in your *zanana*, but you have to decide now whether you will give the right to English women who live here and have property here. It is not a question which concerns only Hindus and Mohammedans. But it is a question which concerns English women and Parsi women who are residing in Bihar. Let us not take away their rights, let us not be hostile to the people who are our guests. If there are people here who have no control over their *zanana*, if the discussion has made such people nervous about the conduct of the ladies in the *zanana*, lest they come out of the *zanana* and engage in politics, they should understand their women are not concerned with the present question. The, question is, are men going to deprive English women of their right, are men going to deprive Parsi women, are you going to deprive the Indian Christian women? That is the question. If you have control over your women or if you have trust in your women, if you have your women under control, you could certainly

stop them from doing things which you do not like, but what right have you to consider sex a disqualification?

I consider this a stigma on my nation, on my country, that this sex itself should be disqualified. I have a sati's blood in my veins and I am not prepared to say that the blood is a stain because it is woman's blood.

(1921)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921, Vol III, No.1, pp.80-83, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.372-376)

Treatment of Political Prisoners

[Saiyid Abbas Ali moved the resolution on 24 November 1921: 'To take early steps to treat the political prisoners including non-co-operators as similar prisoners are dealt with in England during their imprisonment and that the facilities in matters of food, clothing, lodging, interviews and communication extended to the European prisoners be given to all such prisoners, pending the final decision as to the arrangements and changes necessary to give to them the treatment extended towards such prisoners in England. Madhusudan spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, I am not going to deal with or in any way opposing clemency of treatment to political prisoners, co-operators or non-co-operators, but I am concerned with certain arguments put forward here - some of these arguments as put forward by a well-known lawyer. They have created some difficulty in my mind, looking at the question from its purely legal aspects. It is only with regard to that legal aspect that I should like, Sir, to address a few words to the House. Mr. Yunus said that when people are tried under sections other than those which are specifically called State offence sections, they may be treated as if they had been guilty under the sections which do not deal with State offences; they may be tried and sentenced under other sections. That creates a great difficulty in my mind. Is this possible? Is it within the competence of any Court of Law to frame a charge under one section and convict him under another section? Can we

in this Council recommend clemency in any form to the law courts? Politics is a thing which should be kept quite outside the atmosphere of the law courts. We are talking of jails. Till a man is inside the jail (I do not know, Sir, what the inside of a jail is, but I was within sight of it expecting at one period of my life to be an inmate) – till a man is inside the jail, the question of how he is to be treated cannot be dealt with by any of those authorities whose action pre-terms of the law which they have to administer.

Secondly as to what should be done and whether any clemency should be shown to any particular person or not or what should be the nature or character of the clemency to be shown – these should be left to the Executive Government. I say Executive Government because it would not be within my department at any rate. That is a point which I think should be made clear. We are going beyond the legitimate limits of the question which we ought to discuss. The actual question at issue is what should be the treatment of persons who had been sent to jail as political prisoners. I certainly, Sir, would ask you to impress upon this Council the supreme necessity of not allowing the political atmosphere to enter our law courts or to ask the law courts to be influenced in any way by political motives or political objects or side issues which have nothing to do with the legal aspect of the question before them.

(1921)

(*Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921, pp.116-117, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.376-377)

Amalgamation of the Oriya-Speaking Tracts

Resolution was moved by Biswanath Kar on 25 Nov. 1921. 'The Council recommends to His Excellency the Governor in Council that they may be pleased to recommend to the Government of India and to the Secretary of State for India that the Oriya speaking tracts existing under the four different Provincial Governments, viz. Bihar and Orissa, Madras, Bengal and the Central Provinces, be united under one Government.' Madhusudan spoke on this resolution.]

'Sir, in some of the speeches which have been delivered specially by hon'ble members from Orissa my name has been mentioned as one who had associated himself with this movement. The hon'ble Leader of the House and Vice-President of the Executive Council has been pleased to entrust me with the pleasant duty of explaining the position and drawing the attention of the House to the real question at issue. For obvious reasons it is not necessary for me to ask the Council to travel with me over the ancient history of Orissa. It is sufficient for me to point out only this fact, which must ever be prominent in the mind of every Hindu, that the Jagannath Temple is the temple where the whole Hindu population of India resorts to see the great god Jagannath. There is one peculiarity in Jagannath which is not to be found anywhere else. Jagannath is called the Hindu God, but he is generally known in Orissa among the *Pandas* and priests of Orissa as Buddha *Avatar*, as an incarnation, or if I may say

so – a deity of the Buddha creed. Buddhism was a religion which did away with caste system and you find an absence of caste rules in Jagannath. There you find a strong affinity between Bihar and Orissa, the like of which is not to be found between any two parts of a province or any two provinces of India. My brethren of Orissa have been pleading before the hon'ble members representing other parts of the Province their cause and telling them how the whole nation has been mutilated, how they have suffered in the past and what their present ambition and earnest desire are. There has been a little misconception with regard to the desire of the Oriya people. The resolution, as I understand, does not admit of any such misconception. The resolution says 'that the Oriya-speaking tracts existing under the four different provincial governments, namely Bihar and Orissa, Madras, Bengal and Central Provinces, be united under one Government'. The prayer is that all these parts where a portion of the population is Oriya should be placed under one Government. I should specially like, Sir, to invite your attention to the fact that the resolution does not say 'under a separate government'. No doubt the mover of the resolution had in view the contingency that it might not be possible to have all these parts now under separate governments to be separated from their respective governments and attached to the present Government. Therefore the resolution means this, those portions of the Oriya-speaking tracts which can be separated and wish to be separated from any of these governments. The very fact that the members from Orissa are asking for the help, co-operation and goodwill of the members representing other parts of this Province shows a desire to be attached to this Province.

'If that is accepted, I am quite willing to amend it so that it may run ' that the Oriya-speaking tracts existing under the four different Governments may be conveniently

separated from their respective Governments'.

'That may be the wish of the mover of the resolution, but certainly this is a question of a technical nature. I mean to say here that the question is not to be answered by the mover of the resolution or by the members representing the areas which have been attached to Bihar and Orissa, because it is a question of self-determination and each portion of the Oriya-speaking tracts under the separate governments will have the right to determine for themselves, as to whether they want to be attached or as it were, mixed with the present Orissa which is a part of Bihar and Orissa. We here, neither I, nor the mover of the resolution nor the other members who stand for Orissa, represent the Madras Oriyas, the Central Provinces Oriyas or the Bengal Oriyas. This resolution means here that there is an intense desire on the part of the Oriyas now represented in this Council to have the other parts of the country which are Oriya-speaking tracts, joined to them and form a part of this Province. This question has to be answered not for them by this Council. All that the hon'ble members here can do now is to say that they are anxious to have certain other parts of the Oriya-speaking tracts joined to Orissa proper. The hon'ble members of this Council will please understand that they are required to decide this question whether Orissa proper as represented by members in this Council here will have the sanction and sympathy of the hon'ble members of the Council representing the rest of the Province in their desire. That is the question. It is not for the members of the Council to decide whether the Oriyas in Madras, in the Central Provinces or in Bengal wish to be united or not, because if we demand self-determination we must give other Oriya-speaking tracts the right of self-determination. Will the respective Governments of Bengal, Madras and the Central Provinces decide this question without consulting the Oriya-speaking people in those parts as to whether they want to

be joined with Orissa proper or not? What the hon'ble members here have to decide is whether they have sympathy with the aspirations of the members who represent Orissa proper to be united to certain parts of the Oriya-speaking tracts lying in other parts of India. That is the question before us. Whether the hon'ble mover accepts my suggestion or not is altogether beside the question, because he only represents a certain part of the Oriya-speaking tracts or Oriya population. I hope the hon'ble members will not dispose of a question of this nature because there is a technical objection, because the mover of the resolution does not see the real question at issue before us. The real fact is that it is not within the competence of this Council to decide as to whether the Madras people want amalgamation or not. The hon'ble members have before them a supplication from the people of Orissa proper who say "we have a desire to be united. Will you give us permission; do you sympathize with our desire?" This Council may adopt this resolution and then the matter will go to the Government of India and as the Hon'ble Leader of the House has said the other Governments concerned will have to be consulted and then the question will either be decided by the Government of India or the matter may have to go to the Secretary of State for decision. We should not be under the impression that we are deciding the question here as to whether the Oriya-speaking people of Madras, Bengal and the Central Provinces should be united.

With these remarks, Sir, I leave the question in the hands of the Council.

(1921)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921, pp.186-188, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.377)

Representation of Depressed Class

[On 31 January 1922 Ganesh Datta Singh moved: 'The Council recommends that in all Boards and Municipalities the Government be pleased to nominate a member to represent the depressed classes.' Madhusudan Das spoke in support of this resolution.]

'Sir, certain thoughts have crossed my mind which I must confess I have not been able to characterize, qualify or classify. I have read, and what I did read was a correct account because it has been corroborated to me by persons who were either eye witnesses or ear witnesses, that Mahatma Gandhi made it an important part of his creed that the untouchable classes should be merged in the higher classes. Untouchability as a boundary line between man and man should be removed. Very little attention has been paid to that part of Mahatma's creed and almost nothing has been done in that direction. But I feel, and feel with pride, that in this Council Chamber where we are trying to attain His Majesty's *swaraj*, we are carrying out the creed of the non-co-operator with enthusiasm and unanimity. I do not see any reason whatever why, because a man follows a certain occupation, he should be robbed of those advantages and those privileges which God conferred on humanity and which law has conferred upon every citizen. I suppose this idea had its origin in human pride - I do not like to call it caste system or this system or that system all those ideas which distinguish between man and man on some flimsy

ground are really derived from human pride. Man has always divided class from class by conferring upon himself, if he is in a superior position, some mark of superiority, whether it is a sacred thread or whether it points to the colour of the skin, or whether it is a particular position in life or it is the possession of learning or education. All throughout the history of the world you will find that there is an attempt by man to efface from humanity the stamp of divinity which it received when man was created first, when the babe child is born. The hon'ble mover of the resolution referred to an incident which he said had made such a deep impression on his mind that he could recall the incident at any time. I do not know how to communicate my sense of respect and admiration for the hon'ble mover of this resolution, because I know he is a Hindu of Hindus. He ought to be an object lesson to all who take their stand on pride of superior caste. They ought to see that Hinduism is not inconsistent with the recognition of humanity in certain classes. There was a time when a certain section of the Hindus considered the Europeans untouchables. I remember an instance when a *Raja* shook hands with a Lieutenant-Governor and when he returned home he had to bathe and sanctify himself in several ways. I heard from a High Court Judge that when he was a junior joint Magistrate in one of the districts of Bengal he had a *Pandit* who used to come and teach him Bengali. Every morning when the *Pandit* came he made a *salam* and when he left he made a *salam*. One day the Englishman asked him, "Well, my dear *Pandit*, you call me a *mlecha*, an 'untouchable', why do you make a *salam*?" The Pandit said, "Sir, don't ask me that question". "No", said the Magistrate, "I must have a reply". The Pandit said, "Then you will have to pardon me for my impertinence; I never made a *salam* to you." The magistrate said, "How is that, you did it every day". The Pandit said, "Sir, it is not a *salam* but it is striking my head to show my bad luck".

Perhaps some people here may know that there was a man – will not name the office he held neither will I name the man but he was well-known in Calcutta. He was given an appointment as a copyist by the *bara sahib* because his father had done some service in the *bara sahib's* house, but the clerks in the office would not allow him to get into the office. But he had a mighty soul in him; young as he was, he was determined to rise. He had to sit in the verandah and no one would allow him to buy any sweetmeat from the man who brought sweetmeat to the office and the poor young man used to go to the Lal Dighi and drink water there. But he was there and I knew him personally and I asked him to dine with me. He told me that he never left any portion of his work undone even if he had to be in office till midnight. He finished his work and never gave anyone a chance of finding fault with his work and he never asked anybody for help. When he got Rs. 200 the people in the office asked him to go inside. When he got Rs. 500 and had some posts at his disposal these young men used to go to his house and smoke *hookah* and eat sweetmeats with him. Then he went further and got Rs. 600, Rs. 700, Rs. 800, and Rs. 1000 without applying for it. One day his boss sent for him and asked him if he could suggest the name of a person, who was not an 1.C.S. whom he could give an important post. That young man named some one in the Punjab and another person in Madras. His boss asked him if he knew anybody in Calcutta, and he said that he did not know. The next day the boss sent for him and congratulated him as so and so. I have seen that man myself leading a *sankirtan* party in Calcutta.

So it is nothing but pride; pride of wealth, pride of learning, pride of position. But here we have to consider in this Council Chamber the right of man as a citizen. Does society, does the state not derive any service from the depressed classes? Do they contribute at all to the upkeep

of the state and to the upkeep of man's position and society? If they do contribute in any way, then it is the bounden duty of this Government to recognize them as good citizens as anybody present in this Chamber. I should be the last person to hate a man because he has a certain origin. But such is human prejudice against certain classes that you cannot possibly ignore the fact that it is not the depressed classes or oppressed classes who have gone down, but it is those classes who consider themselves of having the proud privilege of being a superior class and who have kept them down in the scale of society, it is they who have gone down in the scale of humanity. That is my sincere conviction, and I am very glad indeed that a resolution like this has come from an orthodox Hindu gentleman and that it has been so ably, so earnestly and so enthusiastically supported. And I can assure the hon'ble members of this Council that nothing will be wanting on my part, if I can in any way contribute by my humble service to the uplifting of these classes. There will certainly be municipalities and district boards where you will find a man who belongs to that class itself. I had a man whom I took on, on Rs. 7 a month, and I am now paying that man Rs. 159 a month, and he can do work which I would challenge any man on Rs. 600 to do, even if I brought him out from England.

With these remarks I support the resolution.

(1922)

(Source: *Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1921, pp.430-33, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.403-)

Salaries of Ministers

'Sir, the hon'ble mover of the motion read out a portion of: my speech which I had made in this Council last year about this time. He should have read out another portion which relates to the position of my brother-Minister on my left. Mr. P. K. Sen pointed out the injustice of applying my ideal of a Minister of Local Self-Government to the Hon'ble Minister of Education. I am sorry an attempt to perpetrate such an injustice has been done. I shall read out a portion of the speech in which I made it very clear that the considerations and reasons which made it necessary that the office of the Minister of Local Self-Government should be honorary do not apply to the Minister of Education.

The passage runs thus:

> "But my reasons for making the office of the Minister of Self-Government honorary do not apply to the Minister of Education. He has no honorary workers to help him. He is the head of a salaried staff and it is but need that his office should have the present emoluments which are by no means out of proportion to the nature of his responsibilities".

When the hon'ble mover of the motion read out a portion of the speech which I delivered last year and when he came to that portion of my speech which referred to sacrifice in the service of one's country, I noticed laughter of ridicule. I was not surprised at all at this ridicule. People who come out of a foreign country and receive emoluments

not only for services rendered, but also for having left their mother-country, are not likely to appreciate patriotic feelings of Indians to raise up self-governing institutions. Men who leave their country to earn a salary and pension are not likely, in a large percentage of cases, unless they grow to a mature ripe age, to experience the impulse of patriotic feelings. But I should not be doing justice to the service if I did not mention that there are noble exceptions to this rule. A member of the Indian Civil Service who rose to be the ruler of an important province, in a letter written to an Indian, said, "Though I did not see eye to eye with you, though I did not approve of your methods, I have always considered you a true patriot and that is the highest compliment one can pay to a public man". The author of this letter now occupies an important position in the India Office. I feel happy in the contemplation that this laughter of ridicule did not reach my esteemed friend the Leader of the House or Mr. Morshead. I was not surprised at this laughter. But it pained me very much that the occasion for this merriment was given by my countryman.

'If my esteemed friend the Leader of the House says so, I make an unqualified apology for the mistake and I unreservedly withdraw what I said in regard to that matter.

'That part also of course is withdrawn and I certainly am glad to make an apology to my countryman.

The hon'ble mover of the motion wanted to know where the scheme with an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government was the first step necessary was the substitution of an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government for a paid Minister. The Hon'ble Leader of the House read out Section 52 of the statute relating to the Minister. The statute empowers the Governor to appoint his Minister, and it lays down the amount of salary which such Minister should be paid. Reading the statute, any man with a grain of sense shall see that it rests with the Governor to decide whether

he would take an honorary Minister. If the Governor did not accept my reasons for making the office of Minister of Self-Government honorary, if His Excellency did not accept my suggestion for making my office honorary, it was not possible for me to work out a scheme. It is not within the power of anyone here to present a scheme in this Council without the sanction of His Excellency the Governor. Whether I have done my part of the work, whether I offered to serve honorary or not, my critics would do well to refer to His Excellency the Governor and they may also refer to His Excellency the Viceroy. The correspondence on the subject between me and His Excellency I am bound to treat as confidential: but I shall he thankful to the hon'ble members who are my critics – and in this case all three of them are expert lawyers – if they would kindly accept my *vakalatnama* and plead before His Excellency on the wisdom of having an honorary Minister. If they are anxious that I should vacate this office, it will give them an opportunity to discuss the question of my successor. I can assure my critics that after all that has transpired during the last few days, I shall be glad to be relieved of the responsibilities of this office. As a Minister I am bound to be loyal to the Governor and I must hold this office "during his pleasure". These are the words of the statute. I cannot walk out of my office whenever I like. I cannot secure expulsion by being disloyal and unmanageable.

My proposal that my office should be honorary is the pivot on which the argument for reduction of the salary stands. This is an *orgumentum ad hominem*. Therefore the application of this argument to my brother on my left is absolutely unjustified. The argument as put forward by the hon'ble mover is that as I offered to work honorary, therefore I should accept a lower salary which involves a smaller amount of sacrifice. I offered to sacrifice Rs. 5,000, and why should I object to sacrifice one thousand? Sacrifice has its

compensation in the satisfaction which it brings to the man who makes the sacrifice. A sacrifice must be voluntary in order to deserve the name; the reward of sacrifice must be of a kind which brings satisfaction to the author of the sacrifice. That satisfaction must be his and not the satisfaction of another person. The mother's sacrifice for her offspring is the brightest illustration of sacrifice. She builds the body of her child with her blood, but do you think it will give her satisfaction if her blood were transfused into another person's sick child in order to save such sick child? Do you think the poor goat that is sacrificed before the Goddess Kali feels any satisfaction in being sacrificed? The man who sacrifices the poor goat enjoys the satisfaction. The poor goat dies, but the man who arranges for its being beheaded pleases the Goddess Kali. Babu Ganesh Datta Singh is in the position of the man who offers the goat as sacrifice. He wants to force the Ministers to a sacrifice and expects to secure to himself the credit of the sacrifice. I am ready to sacrifice the whole salary, if I am allowed to serve my country and my King in a way that will bring satisfaction to me, but I am not prepared to make a sacrifice of one pice to give satisfaction to the mover of the motion or his colleagues in this campaign against the Ministers. The idea of asking the Ministers to accept a reduced pay with a vote of censure hanging over their heads like a Damocles' sword is extremely revolting to anyone having a sense of self-respect.

I beg to point out that the present condition of India is due to a hasty imitation of western institutions without stopping to note the points of difference between the two countries: hon'ble members may remember, and our illustrious ex-President may remember, that in the early part of the life of the present Council I objected to the use of the word "House" in referring to the Council Chamber, but the word is being used. It made us feel that it is a replica of the

House of Commons. The result is that we have come to adopt words used in Parliament and imagine that we have the same powers as the House of Commons. I remember an incident where some children engaged in play tried to imitate a court of justice: one became a judge, the second one was made the accused and the other children were *Chaprasies*. The judge ordered the accused to be hanged. The *Chaprasies* hanged him on the branch of a tree near by, and the poor boy died. This is the result of imitating institutions without trying to differentiate. Is this a House? Is this the Ministerial bench? How many Ministers are there? Do Secretaries find a place in the House of Commons? Is the Leader of the House the Prime Minister? In England the King appoints the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister forms a ministry. Who are the Secretaries? Do they not represent the service which has been responsible for the bureaucratic administration in the past? When I vacate my office, will my Secretary go out with me? We forget we are in a Dyarchy. If you compare Dyarchy to a musical instrument, the Minister is playing on it, but the instrument is held by the Secretary who belongs to a reserved service. A man died leaving a cow which was to be divided by his two sons. The cow could not be killed, so the best way they adopted to divide the cow was that the fore part of the animal was given to one brother and the hind part to the other. The result was that one had to feed the animal while the other got the milk.

Ministers are engaged in the nation-building departments, agriculture, public health, etc., while the milk goes to the Hon'ble Members of the Executive Council who collect the revenue. I could speak for hours on the difficult position of the Minister, but the illustration given will give some idea of his difficulties. Hon'ble members who never saw the House of Commons and consequently never watched the proceedings of that majestic House at a single

sitting, have learnt some words used there and have adopted them here without stopping to inquire whether they are applicable to the proceedings of this Council. I do not know whether to admire the absence of humour or the audacity which the thoughtless use of the word "resignation" has given proof of....

'I certainly bow to your ruling. So, my position is that I tried to show the danger we have arrived at in adopting expressions which are used in Parliament, but you have ruled that they are not very relevant. My submission is that I am willing to work as honorary Minister, and I am not prepared to accept a reduced pay by a single pice because that means that at the end of two years my services have been discounted by the Council, and if the Council says have I deserve that discount, let them pass a vote of censure and I will go out much more pleased than I would be if I have to accept a reduction of this kind.

'That was, Sir, at my request. I asked Lord Sinha that the official members should not vote, as I liked to be appointed by the votes of my own countrymen.

'Sir, what about the motion for censure of the Ministers?

'What I said was this: I offered to His Excellency to work as honorary Minister of Local Self-Government, but it entirely rests with His Excellency as to whether he would accept an honorary Minister or not. I also said further that I am bound to treat as confidential the correspondence on the subject between me and His Excellency.

(1923)

(This controversy ultimately led to the resignation of Das as Minister of Local Self-Government. *Proceedings of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1923, pp.962-67, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.509-514)

Dignity of Labour

[Lecture delivered at the Bihar Young Men's Institute Hall, Patna on 17 February 1924.]

Non-Co-operative Movement

Volcanic eruptions bring up to the surface the things hidden in the bowels of the earth. Social upheavals force on our attention the feelings of a population. The recent Non-Co-operation movement was a social upheaval. I do not wish to look at the political aspect or significance of the movement. What were the most striking features of this movement? It first appealed and appealed forcibly to the student community. Boys who spent their infancy and a part of their boyhood in remote villages, left their village life, changed their dress, their habits of daily life and pursued with vigour and ardour the study of a foreign language with a view to secure some high official position or to take to one of the learned profession – these boys and young men left their schoo1 and college and took to plying the Charkha. Did these young men believe that the earnings of plying charkha would gratify the ambition with which they took to English education? Did they expect that the Charkha would gratify their pecuniary appetite?

After a short time they returned to their places in schools and colleges. These facts have a lesson for us if we do not shut our eyes. They prove the existence of a keen desire for manual occupation. The head is stocked with knowledge, the hand is starved. The famished hand took to this

occupation just as a starving man would eat any food without pausing to enquire whether it was healthy or not. Thus they returned to their colleges and schools to resume their studies, but we would be making a great mistake if we believe that the hand's demand for occupation has died out. 'Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do' is an old saying which we should always bear in mind.

Non-Co-operation among Masses

Then let us see how this social upheaval affected the masses. The poor peasant who does not get two proper meals a day paid his might for getting *swaraj*. What does *swaraj* mean to him? It means to him the dawn of an era when he would live more comfortably, when he would earn higher wages; in a word to him *swaraj* means an improved economic condition. The peasant's hands are his assets in life. He earns his bread by manual labour.

Value of University Degrees

We meet every day young men, graduates of our universities hawking their degrees. They ask for the recommendation of a man who had no education but commands wealth and in nine cases out of ten the rich man's recommendation carries greater weight with the officials than the university degrees. What does this prove? It proves that money is valued more than intellectual culture. Brain is at a high discount. Why is this so? Because brain has failed to earn money. This failure is due to want of occupation in which intellectual equipment is in demand. Brain which is the most valuable and most powerful force in human society is a waste product for want of a market

Hand and Land

The peasant's assets are his hands. The Zamindar's assets are his lands, Culture of land is agriculture. Culture of hand

is industry. I am aware that agriculture has been called an industry, but differentiation on the basis of their essentials should not place agriculture in the category of industries. A branch of manual labour which affords facilities for a progressive culture of the hand securing higher wages at successive stages should be properly called industry. This is not the case with the hand working on land. The man, who drives a plough, sows seeds or weeds the fields, will not earn higher wages by the culture of the hand. There is no scope for attainment of a more remunerative skill in the agriculturist's occupation.

Now take the case of a carpenter; he begins by making packing cases. By culture he may learn to make a tantalus which you see before you. Mark the progress in the manual skill resulting in a corresponding rise in the daily wages of the man. Let me assure you that the man who made the tantalus with two snakes with their expanded hoods guarding the bottles was first taken into my service for making packing cases. His initial wages were 6 *annas* a day and in two year's time he was earning one rupee a day and the market value of his handiwork left at least 4 *annas* a day to his employer. This gives a rise in wages from Rs.133 to 365 in two years.

Please see the silver *'Attardan'* on the table. This is the third one of its kind in the world. On close examination you will observe the higher skill of the hand. It is the result of culture of the hand which secures higher wages to the artisan. But, it should not be overlooked that the training cost me a good sum of money, not to speak of the time and personal attention it cost me. These I count as my sacrifice to the cause of industry.

Whether we admire or punish it we pay for dexterity of the hand.The payment is voluntary in some cases and involuntary in others. We pay the pick-pocket as well as the

magical performer. Voluntary or involuntary it is payment for manual dexterity.

Brain and Hand

The forces which are nature's endowment on man are his brain and hands. The hands work under the guidance and control of the brain.

I have shown above that the hand which works on land does not need the guidance of the brain.

Over 98 per cent of the population works on land.

The Relation of land to hand

Land does not grow in area. Hands grow in number with the growth of the population. A holding which sustained a family of 5 members 30 years back now has to support 12 or 15 members. In some cases this extra pressure is relieved by emigration, but in most cases a low standard of vitality is accepted an inevitable.

Land and Government

A considerable portion of the yield of land goes to Government in this Province. By far the largest portion of the income of Government is land revenue. In England there is no land revenue.

I should ask my country men to bear in mind this fact, when they are asked to accept economic principles of England as applicable to this Province.

At the present moment the settlement officer is busy in measuring every field in Orissa while lakhs and Iakhs of Oriyas are working in the neighbouring provinces in factories parted and maintained by foreign capital. The East India Company's first factories were started in Orissa and though Orissa has been more than a century under British rule, Government has not done anything to help the people in the establishment of a single manufacturing factory.

Landless Untouchables

We had in the past and have now a section of population which is landless. They have no occupation assigned to them, by the custom of the province, and most of these people belong to the untouchable class. Being untouchables they live in the outskirts of villages away from the influence, social and moral, of the residents of the village. Their isolated position has driven them to earn their livelihood as criminals.

Germany in India

When I visited the huge factories in Germany I saw how the ponderous wheels running thousands of miles away from India had laid the foundation of a commercial Empire here, how Germany levied to tax on all classes of men and women, from the child who played with the German toys to the aristocratic lady who entertained her guests with music of the piano. The commercial empire needs no police to prevent breach of the peace, no tax collectors to sell your movables, to realize the arrears of taxes, no personal feelings of retaliation against any person. The Indian's every day life was regulated by the Directors of the huge factories of miles away.

Three Great Forces

Here I saw an illustration of what money can do when it is converted into power. A machine is money converted into a reproductive power. It is a power whose influence is felt and paid for in foreign countries. The money invested in a manufacturing factory can be kept under the control of the investor if the Articles of Association of the Company be framed with a view to that.

I was convinced that our first step towards the elevation of India was to establish economic self Government on the rocky foundation of the common interest of three forces

available to us. These three forces are *'dhan, jan* and *man'.* I thought why can't we have similar institutions in India where there is greater need for them, where millions of hands are famished, where the brain is a waste product and where money has lost its value and represents a pool of stagnant water without the virtues of a running stream.

Difficulties of Combination

When I tried to work out the details in my mind, the facts which distressed me were the difficulties of raising money for building up a new industry to be run on European lines. The factory building has to be constructed, the machines imported, men trained to work the machines satisfactorily and the demands for the outturn created – all these required at least ten years. To train men to work machines satisfactorily requires more time and is far more expensive than the public imagine. The public are apt to form an idea of the cost of training a work man from the expense one incurs in educating an orphan. They forget that in the case of the orphan you have to provide for the necessaries of one life and his books and schooling fee. In the case of training an ordinary labourer to become a successful operative there are other considerations. To begin with, you have to select an intelligent adult labourer. Such a man has his burdens of life. He supports his family by his daily labour. You must pay him at least the amount he is earning at the time. This means a monthly scholarship of at least Rs.25/-. You must train up at least a hundred men to run a factory. Then you have to pay for the power, the coal, etc., to run the machines. I have found that it takes at least one year to make a labourer a successful operative. But the most expensive item is that during this year you have to supply the raw materials on which he practices. This item is very expensive. To this is to be added the damage to the machines every now and then.

Joint Stock Company

The system of doing business on joint stock company line was unknown to India. It is a now institution. The caste system divided the artisan classes: each caste followed a particular line of industry, mutual confidence which is the basis of doing business for the interest of share-holders, who belong to different castes, is not possible. It is not possible to induce a high caste Hindu gentleman and a share-holder of the untouchable class to run a joint business for common benefit. This accounts for the absence of business on joint stock lines in India.

In India the individual works for his gain. He is paid for the outturn of his hand. This is suitable for a primitive state of society where cultivation is the chief occupation of man. But when with the increase of population the land fails to supply occupation to the growing population, and the wants of daily life increase, it is necessary to increase the out-turn of the hands. It is necessary to find out some method by which one man could do fifty men's work. This is done by placing a machine in the hands of an operative. The man then comes to possess fifty hands, more powerful than Ravaneswar of Ramayan. But a factory requires a large initial capital. In Europe this capital is raised by the issue of shares. I have shown above that the joint stock company system is foreign to India. The development of a new industry means initial loss for a number of years. The Indian knows only one kind of investment and that is lending money. The money-lender counts his interest from the moment he pays the money. The idea that his money would fetch no interest a few years is not consistent with his idea of investment. The money lender will lend money on the fifth mortgage of a property at 12 per cent interest; fully aware of the fact that he would not get back either the principal or interest for twenty years but never-the-less he will advance money if under the terms of the mortgage the interest runs from the

date of the deed. But I am certain you cannot get a single money-lender to lend money on the condition that he would get no interest for the first ten years, but will have a punctual payment of interest annually at the rate of 25 percent after 5 years from the date of the deed. The Indian capitalist will invest money in litigation on the chance of recovering it from the property, should the party to whom he supplies funds win the case. He will continue supplying funds for the Privy Council appeal even after two successive defeats in the trial in the lower court and the High Court. Nothing is more uncertain than the result of litigation, yet I have known lawyers who well understand the uncertainty about the result of a litigation advancing money on the chance of winning a case. They would advance hundreds of thousands on this wild goose chase but would not invest ten rupees in a point stock company. The reason for this is to be found on a well known trait of human character. Man will do what he has been accustomed to do; he distrusts whatever is new.

Failures

Unfortunately Bengal's first attempt to develop industries was started at the time of Bengal partition. The people had suffered from a political wrong. The partition was considered as a division of the national life. The national life of a population is made up of relationship by blood, of past history, of traditions whose influence on life begins in the cradle. When you cut up these sacred ties by the sudden stroke of a political sword you shake the nation's life to its foundation. The people started agitation. When the ocean is agitated by a storm, every drop of water joins informing the mighty waves which dash against the side of the ship, close over its deck and give a watery grave to the vessel, its cargo and its crew.

The ocean then presents an impressive spectacle of the unity and destructive powers of its water but that is not the

proper moment to embark in search of treasure in an unknown distant land without a chart.

The move for industrial development at the time was purely political in its character. It was a menace to the manufacturers in England. The prime movers were men whose only contribution to the cause was platform eloquence. Eloquence roused the nation's feelings and people who commanded cash, subscribed to the industrial undertakings. The nation in its excitement lost all balance of reason and calm cool calculations which a measure intended to improve the economic condition of a country requires. The movement was a maneuver in a political warfare. The political storm subsided, when the partition was revoked and the industrial institutions languished and were finally closed leaving the share-holders wiser but poorer.

The legacy of this industrial movement is distrust in joint stock management. This is a great stumbling block in an attempt to popularize joint stock line of business.

Utkal Tannery

There is a full history of the institution in a report written by an expert, who had been deputed by the Government to Bengal to visit the place and write a report. That report has been published. The report contains a history of the factory, a detailed valuation of its belongings and lands his recommendation to form a joint stock company, his calculation showing how a dividend of 16 shall be earned. This report will show that the Utkal Tannery was not a jetsam or flotsam of the Bengal Swadeshi movement.

Sacrifice

The first thing necessary to induce the Indian capitalist to invest in joint stack companies is to find out men who from motives of benevolence and patriotism would agree to bear

the loss of a factory in its infancy and when it has passed the period of risks and loss and when there is a ready market for its out-turn and the payment of dividend from the date the company begins to work, is a certainty, then and then only should the founder of the factory transfer the factory to a joint stock company on the present value of the factor, without any reference to the loss he suffered at the early stage of the factory. The loss incurred during the experimental stage should find no place in the valuation of the present assets of the concern. The loss should be his sacrifice to the cause of industry. It is not reasonable that the company should pay for the loss, because they were not consulted about it. We pay a man at the market value of his services and do not asses then on the basis of the amount his education cost his father. I believe that in the present state of India every man who conceives an idea which he believes will improve the economic or political or social condition of India should consider it his sacred obligation to his motherland to shoulder the responsibility of supplying all that is necessary in the shape of money, time and application till his nebulous concept is materialized and may be presented to the public as an object whose usefulness may be tested by the public.

It is not my wish to find fault with these who have followed the contrary principle of materializing their ideas with other people's money, but during forty years of public life spent in the most backward part of India, I have acted in perfect union with this principle. It has at least one advantage and that is that a man is more careful with his own money than he is with other people's money in the experimental stage. His failures teach him to be careful; they do not breed public distrust in the ultimate success of the project. There is a cry for *swaraj* through the length and breadth of India. This means demand for accession of political power. This war with the Government has been

raging for over thirty years. During this period the economic problems have been neglected. The result is progressive increase of poverty. The vitality of the population has got lower and lower every day. No attempt has been made to improve the economic condition of the masses. I have never heard any suggestion to improve the economic condition of the masses. The property of the masses has been made the main plank of criticism of Government administrations, but never has any scheme been drawn up to bring together the forces available to us and lay the foundation of an economic empire.

Prevention of Cow Killing

Our every day life is being regulated by the directors of the huge factories in Germany. I saw how the hides of the dead cows were converted into leather goods in requisition in the German army. I was struck with the difference in the two countries. In India we are engaged in council resolutions, platform speeches and lengthy, memorials to stop the slaughter of cows, while German factories were turning out valuable leather goods from the dead cattle. It struck me if Indians only learnt how to manufacture leather goods from dead cattle hides which is cheaper than butcher's hides the slaughter of cows would stop as a natural consequence of the principle of supply and demand.

It is not known to the public that almost all the tanneries which had been started and closed within the last quarter of a century in Bengal and Bihar used only butcher's hides for the manufacture of leather, stop the export of all dead cattle hides, let out tanneries use them in the manufacture of leather, and the slaughter of cows and bullocks must stop automatically.

Industrial war between England and Germany

The number of dead cattle hides exported to Germany is

simply amazing. Long before the late war in Europe, 1 saw the effect of this export trade on the industrial economics of India. I drew the attention of the Government of India to it by correspondence and by interpellation in the then Viceregal Council; but the suggestions of non-officials are always received with contempt. My suggestions shared the same fate. But I foresaw the value of learning the German method of treating the dead cattle hides and accordingly engaged the services of two Germans in the Tannery.

Both these men were taken prisoners soon after the war broke out. You hear in the temple of Jagannath at Puri and in other temples the mingled sounds of trumpets, gongs and drums early in the morning. There is not much music in them, because they are meant to rouse the gods from sleep. There is a great resemblance between the Hindu gods and the official gods in the Olympic heights of Simla.

The booming of guns, the clatter of swords and the cries of the wounded soldiers roused the Indian Government from sleep. They discovered that Germany made 48 million of army boots from the hides exported from India. The Government put a duty of 15 per cent on hides exported, with a rebate of ten per cent on such portions as were used in the leather manufacturing factories within the British Empire. The object of the rebate was to give an economic advantage to the British Empire excluding India.

It is not necessary for me to ask you to read between the lines of this Governments order. But what was the result? The leather manufacturers in the United Kingdom and its allied dominions failed to use the Indian hides and the result is Germany has again seized the hide export trade. The value of this export trade is over 12 crores and about 70 per cent of this quantity is exported from Calcutta to Germany.

Economic Slavery

What is the relation between two countries one of which

supplies raw materials out of which the other manufactures goods to supply the needs of daily life? The supplier of the raw materials gets the coolie's wages; the manufacturer earns the wages of the skilled workman. This is slavery not enforced but accepted with, pleasure. Is it not in our power to burst the fetter of this slavery in the economic world? There is an organisation and capital collection of raw materials, there is capital for the costs of export; what is wanted is the employment of these for the manufacture of leather goods. The export trade is entirely in the hands of our Mohammedan brethren and so is the sale of finished leather goods from Europe. They control the two extremities of the industry which pay least, and assign to the Germans the part of the industry which is most remunerative. It is proposed to teach the scientific part of this industry in the Ravenshaw College and give practical training in the factory.

Education and Training

I have been requested by gentlemen in high positions, both official and non-official to take their sons and relations as apprentices in the Tannery with a view that they may learn the industry. These gentlemen have not the slightest insight into the nature of this industry. They seem to put it on a level with wood industry or metal industry or even the khaddar industry. In all other industries the material, on which the artisan or the operative works, comes from nature's store house. All metals are dug up from the bowels of the earth; so it is with wood, cane, bamboo and every thing else. There is no such thing in nature as leather. The skin is given by nature to the animal as a protection from sun and rain and is intended by nature to perish with the carcass of the animal. This nature's gift has in the first instance to be converted into an object from which the king wants lining to his hat and accoutrement for his Majesty's

military dress. His Majesty's judges require covers for their seats on the Bench and the peon wants a pair of foot wear. In this industry man is the creator, so to speak, of the material on which the *chamar* of the operative works. It is therefore an essentially scientific industry. The first process in the industry is a scientific process. Thus it supplies occupation to our educated men. That was my main reason for selecting this industry as it gives occupation to our educated men.

The landless untouchable classes have been a source of anxiety to me from the early days of my industrial activities. Within the last few years there has been an attempt to raise there social position, to place them on a level with the higher classes. Their friends have appealed to feelings of humanity, to reason, to the state of things in other countries. It is not my province to test these methods by the actual results achieved. I shall give you an account of the method I pursued. I directed my attention to the economic aspect of the position of this class; I followed the principle by which General Booth succeeded in uplifting the fallen and the despised in other countries of the world. First give a man work by which he can earn enough to keep him comfortable and then talk to him of the moral and religious side of human nature.

I shall here read a portion of a report written by an expert who was deputed by the Bengal Government to write a history of the Utkal Tannery.

> 'The Utkal Tannery is the pioneer in this line of work in whole of India. A good deal of money has been spent and a lot of trouble taken in organizing this work. Lizard skins are not easily available in quantity and cannot be bought in the market like the hides and the skins of the domestic animals, e.g., the hides of the cattle or skins of the goat or the sheep, lizards live in the jungles and seem to abound in the hills of Orissa. The Proprietor

Mr. Das banded together a number of the hill tribes and got them to catch the lizards in the jungles where they are killed and skinned. The skins are salted and brought to the Tannery at Cuttack by these aborigines. It is reported that in the beginning these men had to be lavishly remunerated for taking to this work, the Proprietor paying often as much as Rs.2 per skin. This has been going on for well over a decade and at least lakhs of lizard skins have been tanned at the Tannery. About 50,000 skins are still in stock. The men have now got used to the collection of the skins and make their living by it. They are now paid about annas six per skin. If the collection be so difficult the tanning is not easy either. The process ordinarily followed in tanning goat or sheep skins is not quite successful with lizard skins. Special process to suit the nature of these skins had to be worked out and good deal of money was wasted in the early trials and failures. During my visit to the Tannery I saw hundreds of lizard skins which were absolutely ruined by wrong tannage. The process now used in quite satisfactory and the quality of the outturn is excellent. The lizard skins of the Utkal Tannery are being requisitioned not only all over India but also in England and America? If properly conducted there appears to be a bright prospect for this line of work. Both European and American fancy leather goods manufacturers extensively use such leather as are made from lizard, crocodile and pig skins. In absence of the genuine article they have often to be satisfied with imitation leathers which are produced by embossing cow hide or sheep skin leathers with characteristic grain patterns of crocodile, lizard or the pig. If they get well finished genuine article it may be expected they will welcome it cordially and pay good prices. Only recently the writer got an enquiry from the British Trade

Commissioner if he could name Indian tanneries capable of supplying tanned lizard skins as they were in growing demand in England.'

[Madhusudan Das, the speaker showed to the audience samples of lizard skins in several colours. He also read out correspondence showing the great demand for them in Europe, America and Japan.]

The dying and finishing are the most difficult part of the work. These are done by a man, who is innocent of the alphabet of any language. I took him on service on Rs.7 a month to draw water and now I am paying him Rs.100 a month. You have seen the demand for his work in the countries where we send our young men to learn the leather industry. The man is still illiterate. Who can say after this there is no dignity in labour? Teach a man some work which will command the appreciation of the world and you raise his social position.

Line of Economic Gravitation

What is wanted is a change in the line of economic gravitation. The people require to be taught that the present line of economic gravitation has to be changed. It is not conducive to the growth or prosperity. The inevitable consequence of this is permanent poverty of the nation. The whole nation is tied to the fly-wheel of the present administrative machinery. The Government revenue is derived from lands. The Zamindar is Government's collecting agent. The peasant pays his rents to the zamindar. Revenue feeds the administrative machinery. Hence I say nearly the whole nation is tied to the fly wheel. As the wheel revolves every revolution increases the momentum and increased suffering results to the hands tied to it. The hands tied to lands are tied to the administrative fly wheel. They

turn the wheel which grinds them. All money gravitates towards land. The man with money either buries it or invests it in land. This constitutes the present line of economic gravitation. The people should be taught that money is a power. To be a power their investment must be under their direct control. I have shown that the yield of lands he cannot control; the clouds above, the daily increasing costs of administration, the additional cesses and above all the landlord and tenants Acts and the constant friction and litigation with the tenants leaves very little room for the Zamindar's control.

Every settlement reduces the value of the Zamindari. This is so in temporary settled estates of Orissa. Every accession to the tenants' rights is so much relaxation of Zamindar's control. With the Zamindar his wealth is a source of weakness, not of power. He is in constant fear of every *Hakim*.

Most people in India invest in Government securities. The late war proved that Government securities lose their intrinsic value. During the War the Government securities were reduced in value job, while the value of shares of some companies rose twenty to twenty five times their face value. At the present day German marks have been very much reduced. Before the war 25 marks were equal to a £ but now a £ is equal to several lakhs of marks. The value of the German Government coin has gone down amazingly low, but can you get industrial products of Germany cheaper? I know some Indians ordered machines, making remittance in German marks, because the catalogues showed the price in marks, but they found out that their calculations were incorrect. The change of Government will reduce the value of the current coin, but when money has been converted into power no change of Government will affect the value of the power.

The leather industry if placed on a proper footing will

benefit all classes. Very few people know how the hide export business affects the poor peasants of this province. Every peasant has his cattle. They are the companions of his daily life. He wants them to cultivate his field what becomes of the hides of the cattle when they die? By the custom of the country the Hindu peasant is not allowed to sell the hides. The result is that they are taken by the *chowkidars* of the village or by some untouchable classes. In the Feudatory States of Orissa the State raises a large revenue. To the Hindu *Rajah* the sale of hides is not forbidden by the *shastra*, but the *shastras* apply to the poor peasant. The poor peasant loses his plough cattle, his lands lie uncultivated, he has not the means to replace the dead cattle, but the hides benefit the *Rajahs*, the exporters and the Germans.

If a committee of influential men of the two communities, Hindus and Mohammedans, be appointed to study the details of hide trade, I am sure there will be found a common platform where all may join in the development of this industry, as a means of improving the economic condition of many classes and reduce to a very large extent the killing of old cattle which are unfit for agricultural or dairy purposes. These are bought for their hides.

I have drawn your attention to the difficulties of raising money for the development of an industry on a scale which would use the hides which are exported to Germany. For this you require a network of Tanneries throughout the country. Thus it is necessary to teach both the scientific and the practical branches of this industry. I saw these educational needs fully fifteen years ago, and with a view to provide for the experimental work for the student I raised plantations in the factory premises. [Madhusudan Das showed to the audience a scheme prepared by an expert.]

There are organisations for the collection of hides in every part of the country. All that is necessary is to induce the capitalists who are carrying on this export trade to send

their men to learn the industry. When he has learnt it, he comes back and starts a tannery in the locality. The hides now exported will be turned into leather.

(1924)

(Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

Oriya Leaders' Conference

I stand here to-day to see that my long cherished desire has been fulfilled. We have gone through very difficult periods since I started this movement. I had to face people who were powerful in money, resources and intellect. With God overhead and conscience within, I fought single handed. One day it stunned me that God had something in his mind when he gave me, the first Graduate of Orissa, the thought of unifying the Oriya race. I thought of it and found that history was behind me which would do credit to any nation in the world. I had to do something for my nation. I was alone. Even the Oriya *Rajahs* were ashamed to call themselves Oriyas and Oriya school boys called themselves Bengalis.

One conspicuous *Rajah* with whose name this hall has been associated was known in Bengal as a Bengali. Remember I had a talk with him one night from 8 p.m. till 1 a.m. and I told him, "Raja, I am determined to make you an Oriya to-day." He presided over the first Utkal Union Conference. The Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals prevented the *Rajahs* from attending the conference of the Utkal people who wanted to be united. He said nobody should attend Mr. Das's conference. I wrote a letter to Lord Curzon, in which I said,'It is not likely that Your Excellency would read this letter and perhaps it may find a place on your boots. Whoever may read this letter I owe a duty to the Oriya nation and I want to make it known to you what the pangs of the nation are.' I got a reply from the Private

Secretary. He referred to me in his letter as I am able and cultured gentleman and said should you come, 'The Viceroy would be pleased to discuss the matter with you.' Lord Curzon was keen-sighted and bold and though he was a despot in a sense he had a sympathizing heart.

Perhaps he thought I was a fool but he found in me an earnest patriot and a lover of his Nation. When I pleaded the cause of my Oriya Nation tears came out of my eyes. I was the only Oriya student in Bengal then and all ridicule was directed against me. They use to call me *'Madhuude Madhuude'*. His Excellency sent for the Military Secretary and asked him who the highest officer in Orissa was. He then told him to tell the Commissioner that he was coming to Orissa. Some sort of Durbar was got up at Puri and there was no place for a man like me. He enquired 'Where is Mr. Das? I want him to be more.'

When I talk a retrospective view of the whole agitation what do I find? There was no nation when I started the movement. I found only heaps of dry bones—bones, bones, nothing but bones. I undertook tremendous work to infuse life, to give muscles and arm my people with ammunition with help from none but the Father above.

Lord Curzon's idea was to redress the wrong. He got the papers and decided what areas should be amalgamated. Parlakimedi question does not arise from that decision. The Governor of Madras then became officiating Governor-General for some time. I told him that he was a party to the suit. It is British justice that he should set judgment over me?

I ask – Is this justice? Where do you stand now? I stand where I stood in the days of Curzon and we start from that movement. Parlakimedi question does not arise. The brief summary I have given you.

Rouse the consciousness of the nation – that rings in my ears –

Jara Jayabheri Ganga Godavari
Sunithile Chakite
Odisa bolina ghrunita ete dine.

Lay your lives at the alter of my nation. Attain this position and stand as one of my nation where it stood in the old days.

The English people as a commercial nation wanted money. The Civil Servant did not care to study the language nor the details. The Bengalis learnt the system of management from Mohammedan time. They were familiar with the system of management. Thus the British introduced a dangerous element. They created an intermediary ruling race. The Oriya interest was opposed to the Bengalis. Recently some years after the English saw things in Orissa which were astonishing there was nothing but regular dacoity. The Bengalis joined with the English to keep us down. I wanted to change. It will not change. The intermediary ruling race for powerful Oriyas became more weak. Changes in the administration have always put us in disadvantage.

What does justice require Lord Curzon's position – that is a fair and just demand. There were no railways then. Now there are railways. This is a brief survey. The man in the street understands it. We demand that from the British nation. I have not done any part. My efforts are more rewarded by Lord Curzon. There is something in it. It lies beneath the surface. The conscience of the British nation can be roused. Knock, knock but don't kick and it shall open.

In am in a unique dress in national gathering. I am too old. I have to keep myself warm. I have to take in electric heat three times a day otherwise I cannot stand.

I heard some of the speeches. Let Orissa be the strongest network for the defence of India. Your work is easy today. I had to get up a meeting in one of the side rooms of the Parliament with 70 members of the House of Commons. I

wanted to see Lord Morley. I had a remarkable interview with his Private Secretary. He said that Lord Morley would like to meet Madhusudan Das not as a representative of the Oriya race but as Madhusudan Das. Let this be, I said. When I met him I told him, 'Like an Englishman do not degrade yourselves by ruling with despot's hand. Train them as free men; [otherwise] they will make ugly despots. Place the Queen Victoria on the throne of Russia she will be useless. Put the Czar on the British throne he will be assassinated in 24 hours.

A critical moment has no doubt arrived in the life of the Oriya nation. I do not put it in detail. My case has not been heard. My enemy is in the judge court. This is likely to offend my body. But I must not offend my king of kings.

Don't wish ill of my nation. God will bless you. If you want to be leaders of the nation, do not try to be at the head. When a battle rages, cannon roar, the commander is miles away. See the tree, its roots are hidden. Take the human heart. It is most vital. Therefore it is hidden. Otherwise it would have been at the tip of the nose. Look at a watch. The dial is outside, but lever is behind. Go on with the battle.

The question of the percentage of population is now talked of. The real question should be which race hast shown the capability of ruling over other races, what nation has more vitality than that of others? The neighbouring races tried to kill our spirit. Have they succeeded? You can't be killed. The vitality that lies within the Oriya nation cannot be extinguished. A nation's capability to rule over other nations is to be tested by how far this nation has influenced other nations. Take for instance the Bengalis. They tried to keep us down. But you know it is an Oriya house that a Bengali was trained to be the first woman lawyer in India. Oriya religious cult is adopted throughout the length and breadth of the country. What nation is not attracted by the Juggarnath? Look at the vitality of Oriya languages. The

Bengalis are vociferous in praise of Chaitanya, an Oriya.

You are studying more. With my age now I have given you a survey of my life. Never develop individuality. The rain drops that fall from heaven mingle in the stream. The stream runs nearest to the sea. Where it can helps lands, animals, men. Here is a nation; it does good to other nations. The ocean says 'Cast off colour pride.' You are all young. I am perhaps one of the few oldest living men in Orissa. I will tell you one thing.

Persistence we are accused by rulers of India is most law-abiding. Truest to God and persevere. You will be the cynosure of neighbouring eyes. Be willing to help others. The day will come when you will be called upon to render accounts. If you have done well, you will come and say, 'Come dear child and will give the crown of life.'

(13 February 1933)

(This was probably Madhusudan's last public lecture. Source: Nabakishore Das, ed., *Madhusudan's Immortal Words*, Cuttack, 1958.)

A Poem : Uthare Uthare Utkal Santana

[Madhusudan was a writer and poet. Originally written in Oriya this patriotic song of his was translated by his junior and long time colleague Pareswar Mohanty.]

In my life I hoped to behold,
The happy smile of my mother.
But sense of duty that Oriyas lacked,
That hope alas ! did smother.

* * *

Awake ! arise ! Ye sons of Utkal,
How long will Ye slumber ?
The valour and glory of your Sires,
Say, will Ye not remember.

***

If you give your life to nation,
Nation s life is yours.
Its never got by aimless search,
Carried on for years.

***

A suttee to meet her parted Lord,
Ascends the funeral pyre.

To merge in nation why both then,
Cause you death to fear.

***

Nation s history is a perennial stream,
Which nation s life sustains,
Whose waters drunk becomes the blood,
That runs in nation's heroes veins.

***

(n.d.)

(Source: Debendra Kumar Dash, ed., *Madhusudan Das: The Man and His Missions*, Rourkela, 1998, p.189)

Appendix

[Mamadhusudan Das worked as Minister of Local Self Government Department in the Bihar and Orissa between 6 January1921and 9 March 1923. He resigned before the completion of the term. The correspondence appended here is on the issue of his resignation.]

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

'I have to inform the Council that I received this morning the following letter from the Hon'ble Mr. Madhusudan Das, Minister in the Local Self-Government Department.'

Patna,
8 March 1923

"Your Excellency,

Your Excellency has, I am sure, been informed of the result of the motions about Minister's salary, and a copy of my speech must have been submitted to Your Excellency.

I was obliged to accept the proposal of a reduced pay because I found that my brother Minister was willing to accept the proposal and he felt that I was an impediment in his way. In order to improve his position I agreed to accept the proposal. My brother's position being now secure, I beg to resign my office as Minister of Local Self-Government. I still believe that the office ought to be honorary, but as Your Excellency rejected my proposal on the subject I do not think

I should continue in this office.

I solicit the favour of your relieving me of my duties by making the necessary arrangements, and I shall in the mean time carry on the duties of the office.

Permit me to express my sincere gratitude to you for the kind and cool way in which you considered my views even when I had the misfortune to disagree with you. My humble services as a non-official will always be at your command should you require them in the interests of the country over which God has appointed you to rule.

I remain
Your excellency's most obedient servant
M.S. DAS"

To that letter I have this morning replied in the following terms:

The 9th March 1923

Dear Mr.Das,

It is with much regret that I received this morning your letter of yesterday's date tendering your resignation of the office of Minister in charge of the Local Self-Government Department. In the circumstances I have no alternative but to accept it.

You say that 'still believe the office ought to be honorary, but as Your Excellency rejected my proposal on the subject I do not think I should continue in the office.'

I think, however, you will bear me out that in your letter of the 7th-8th February 1923, which is the only communication I have received from you on the subject, the actual suggestion made by you was you were 'allowed to earn a living by practicing as a *vakil*.'

As it seems to me to be desirable that the precise circumstances should be known to the public, I am, with your consent, communicating the present and the previous

correspondenc to the Legislative Council, in connection with the message announcing your resignation.

Allow me to thank you cordially for the time and labour given by you in your capacity of Minister, as also for the offer of your continued assistance as a private individual should the need arise.

Yours sincerely
(Sd)
H. WHEELER

I think it desirable that, in order that no misunderstanding should exist in the mind of the Council or the public, the previous correspondence that passed between myself and the Hon'ble Mr. Das should also be communicated, and to this the latter has assented. This is all the more necessary since I find that in the course of a speech delivered yesterday in the Council the Hon'ble Mr. Das remarked as follows:

'The hon'ble mover of the motion wanted to know where the scheme with an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government was. The first step necessary was the substitution of an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government for a paid Minister. The Hon'ble Leader of the House read out section 52 of the Statute relating to the Ministers. The statute empowers the Governor to appoint his Minister and it lays down the amount of salary such Minister should be paid. Reading the statute, any man will see that it rests with the Governor to decide whether he would take an honorary Minister. If the Governor did not accept my reasons for making the office of Minister of Self-Government honorary, if His Excellency did not accept my suggestion for making my office honorary, it would not be possible for me to work out a scheme. It is not within the power of anyone here to present a scheme in this Council without the sanction of His Excellency the Governor.

Whether I have done my part of the work, whether I offered to serve honorary or not, my critics would do well to refer to His Excellency the Viceroy. The correspondence on the subject between me and His Excellency I am bound to treat as confidential, but I shall be thankful to the hon'ble members who are my critics - and in this case all three of them are expert lawyers, if they would kindly accept my *vakalatnama* and plead before His Excellency on the wisdom of having an honorary Minister. If they are anxious that I should vacate this office, it will give them an opportunity to discuss the question of my successor. I can, assure my critics that after all that has transpired during the last few days, I shall be glad to be relieved of the responsibilities of this office. As a Minister I am bound to be loyal to the Governor and I must hold this office during his pleasure. These are the words of the Statute. I cannot walk out of my office whenever I like. I cannot secure expulsion by being disloyal and unmanageable.'

The inference which, I take is to be drawn from this speech is that the Hon'ble Mr. Das had suggested to me that the office of Minister in charge of Local Self-Government should be made an honorary one, and that I had declined to accept that suggestion.

In this connection the following extract from a speech delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Das in the Legislative Council on the 21st February 1922 is relevant:

'In an organization in which all the workers are honorary a salaried Minister mars the symmetry and harmony of the organization. The office of the Minister of Local Self-Government ought to be honorary ...To convert this office into an honorary one; the present official machinery needs addition and readjustment. I do not wish to disturb the present arrangement, but it is my intention to move His Excellency to let me have the services of one or two extra officials for whose pay I shall be responsible, I

hope, when this Council meets next year to discuss the budget, to be able (God helping) to place before the Council a scheme in which an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government finds a place.'

I assumed charge of the office of Governor of this province on the 12th April 1922. The first communication which I received from the Hon'ble Mr. Das on the subject of the status of his office is dated the 7th-8th February 1923, and ran as follows:

Patna
The 7th-8th February 1923.

Your Excellency,

I beg to submit the following for Your Excellency's perusal and favourable consideration.

The success of the reforms must be decided by the nature of administration by the local bodies. Medical relief, sanitation, communications and the education of masses are subjects the administration where of has been transferred to municipal and district boards. The importance of these subjects can be gauged by imagining for a moment the abolition of these departments during the trial period of the reforms. The new Municipal Act makes the municipal boards wholly responsible for the Municipal administration. The Local Self-Government Act now before the Council will make the district boards responsible for the administration of the rural areas. The people have not developed a due sense of responsibility necessary for efficient administration of the subjects entrusted to them. The members of these local bodies are honorary workers. Honorary office means sacrifice from a sense of duty to the King and the Country. These local bodies when constituted under the new Act will need constant guidance and advice of the Minister of Local Self-Government. In order that the Minister might exercise an influence over the honorary workers throughout the

province, it is necessary that he should be an honorary worker. A salaried official over the head of thousands of honorary workers is an anomaly. He cannot command their respect and consequently his appeals to the patriotic and benevolent feelings of the people will make the scheme a subject of ridicule to the people. To ensure the success of the reforms it is necessary that the Minister of Local Self-Government should not draw any salary, but should be an honorary worker.

In India personal influence is an important factor when we have to secure the active sympathy and co-operation of the people. Personal influence is earned by working without remuneration. Gandhi's activities in India have proved to demonstrate the value of sacrifice as the price of personal influence.

The non-co-operation movement is a great impediment to the advancement of the reforms. The non-co-operators succeeded in spreading a network of a mischievous propaganda. The personal influence of a few men like Gandhi, C. R. Das is due to their sacrifice. We have to combat with this opposing force; a salaried Minister of Local Self-Government has no chance in this struggle. We must have men who are inspired by patriotic feelings; our honorary workers in the local bodies are a valuable counter force, but a salaried Minister destroys the harmony and symmetry of the whole organization.

Hostile criticisms in the Legislative Council, in the press and elsewhere regarding the salary of the Minister show that the public want an honorary Minister of Local Self-Government.

I am willing to work honorary provided I am allowed to earn a living by practising as a *vakil*.

I shall not allow my professional work to interfere with my duties as a Minister. If I had private means to keep me above the ordinary needs of life I would not have asked for

permission to practise. I have been in public life for nearly forty years, and being the first graduate of the Oriya race, my public life meant financing all public movements. I gave a small portion of my time to my professional work as my public duties took the greater portion of my time.

There is nothing inconsistent in the idea of a practising lawyer being a Minister. There is precedent of a zamindar being a Member of the Executive Council. The *Maharajadhiraj* of Darbhanga was the first Indian Member of the Executive Council in the province. I saw in the papers the other day that the Raja of Mahmudabad has been appointed an honorary Member of the Executive Council of the United Provinces. A zamindar has to look after the affairs of his estate; he is a party to suits in courts and has to give evidence in court. If this is not considered derogatory to the prestige of an hon'ble member of Council, appearance for a party in court by a lawyer should not be considered in any degree derogatory to the prestige of a Minister.

The legal profession has always been considered honourable. The Provincial Governments and the Government of India have recruited members of their Executive Councils from the practising members of the Bar. Practising lawyers have been members both of the provincial and Imperial Governments and at the end of their service have reverted to professional practice. These precedents are a complete answer to objections to my proposal on the ground of loss of prestige.

A Member of the Executive Council is responsible for the administration of the reserved subjects. Law and order constitute the most important of the reserved subjects. There may be breach of the peace among the tenants of a zamindar Member of the Executive Council, or a zamindar Minister. These might occur while a zamindar is a member of the Government. Such a state of things would place the Government in an awkward position. Such difficulties

cannot arise when legal profession is the means of livelihood of a member of Government whether he be a Member or a Minister.

Local self-government is a transferred subject. The responsibility of administration is transferred to the people. The Minister is an elected member of the Council. His appointment as a Minister creates a new relation with His Excellency the Governor, but the super-imposition of this relation does not relieve him of his responsibilities to the people and the Legislative Council which represents the interests of the people. Section 80B of the Government of India Act says that a Minister 'shall not be deemed to be an official and a person shall not be deemed to accept office on appointment as a Minister'.

Section 124 of the Government of India Act penalizes acts amounting to misdemeanors by persons holding office under the Crown in India. Clause 5 of the section prohibits the receipt of presents, but it exempts from such prohibition the fees paid or payable to barristers. This word barrister is meant to include other legal practitioners especially *vakils* practising in the High Courts.

I shall undertake not to absent myself from the meetings of Council. I shall not allow my professional engagements to interfere with my duties as a Minister. I shall consider my professional practice as a means of earning a living and if I have to reduce my comforts of ordinary life I would not mind it considering that this sacrifice will be more than amply rewarded by bringing the people in close touch with the Government and thus kill the spirit of non-co-operation and inspire a desire for co-operation with Government.

Many chairmen in municipal and district boards are practising lawyers. A practising lawyer as a Minister would lend harmony and symmetry to the scheme.

The duties of a Minister of Local Self-Government require knowledge of law and medicine. The local bodies

are manned largely by lawyers. In consequence questions involving interpretation of the provisions of the Municipal Act often come up for decision to the Minister. The new Municipal Act came into force on 1st January of the current year. Before the 15th of January one municipality passed a resolution which they thought was warranted by a certain section of the Act. The question came up to me for decision. I have received representations containing reference to Halsbury's laws of England. My knowledge of law and my study of medicine in early life have been of great help to me in the discharge of my present duties.

It might be necessary to take an additional hand in the Secretariat, but a discussion on this aspect should be taken up should Your Excellency decide on accepting my proposal.

I remain

Your Excellency's most obedient servant
(Sd)
M. S. DAS

To that letter I replied on the 11th February 1923, in the following terms:

PATNA
The 11th February 1923

Dear Mr. Das,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 7th-8th instant, in which you give your reasons for suggesting that you are willing to work as Minister in an honorary capacity if allowed to earn your living by practising as a *vakil*. While not in agreement with the arguments which you urge in justification of such a course, I am afraid there are, to my mind, serious practical objections to it. I do not see how in practice you could combine these duties while doing justice to both or either. Secondly it appears to me to be an absolute impossibility that a Minister should appear as a legal

practitioner in courts subordinate to the Government of which he is a member. I know of no precedent for such a position. I will be happy to discuss the matter should you wish to do so, but I regret that I do not see my way to accept your proposition.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd)
H. WHEELER

The Hon'ble Mr. Das did not avail himself of my offer to discuss the question should he care to do so, and there the matter rested, so far as I was concerned, until the receipt of his letter of the 8th instant.

I need scarcely say that I have received the Hon'ble Minister's resignation with regret, but I feel that it is only right that it should be known that the offer of the Hon'ble Mr. Das as made to me was not unqualified, but was coupled with the condition that he should, while discharging the duties of Minister, be permitted to resume practice as a *vakil*, a condition which I felt it impossible to accept.

(Sd)
H.WHEELER
9th March 1923.

(*Proceedings of Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council*, 1923, pp.1056-64, in N.K. Sahu and P.K. Mishra, ed., *Madhusudan Das : The Legislator*, Rourkela, 1980, pp.515-523)

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Madhusudan Das (1848-1934) is one of the pioneers of modern Orissa. He was active in public life for over 53 years (1881-1934) and was the main force in the foundation of Utkal Youngmen's Association, Utkal Sabha, Utkal Union Conference and Utkal Tannery, etc. He was also involved in the publication of several journals such as *The Utkal Dipika, The Star of Utkal, The Oriya*. The Oriya movement striving for a linguistic and cultural identity was his brain child. As a member of the Bengal Legislative Council (1896-1897, 1900-1902 and 1908-1911), Bihar-Orissa Provincial Legislative Council (between 1912 and 1926) and Imperial Legislative Council (1913-1916) he, like other early nationalists, had raised many issues concerning the general welfare of the country. To him, Utkal is one of the various forms of mother India. A study of his writings would help us to understand the intimate and complex relationships between the nation and the regions.

Dr Pritish Acharya (*b.* 1963) works for the Regional Institute of Education, Bhubaneswar, a constituent of NCERT, New Delhi. He is a known columnist and writer in Oriya. He has to his credit a number of publications including three short story collections, three collection of essays in Oriya and translated many books. His research articles on various aspects of modern Orissa are published in journals like The *Economic and Political Weekly, Mainstream* and *Man in India*.



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